

## THE WIFE OF SEVEN HUSBANDS.

*A Legend of Ancient London.*

In the beginning of the reign of Edward the First, of long-legged memory, there lived upon Corne-hille, over against the spot where the water-toune was a few years afterwards built, a certain blithe and buxome widow, very wealthy, and as fair withall as she was wealthy; she was only in her twenty-eighth year, of a tall and stately shape and bearing, and with commanding and yet right modest features; her face was oval, her hair and eyes of bright black; her forehead high; her eyebrows arched, almost into semi-circles; her nose slightly aquiline; her cheeks high coloured, and yet delicately so; her lips small, and prettily bent; her teeth white and regular; her chin rather forward and dimpled; and her complexion dark though not swarthy; so that upon the whole she had rather a Jewish cast of countenance, and yet there was no rightful reason to suspect that there was even a drop of Isrealitish blood in her veins, for her father, and his fathers before him, for many generations back, had been rich and respectable gold-workers, citizens of London, and had always married among their equals and friends. Busy tongues, however, there were that whispered something or other to this effect—that the maternal grandmother of Mrs. Alice (my young and pretty widow,) during the absence of her husband, who was a merchant had become pretty closely acquainted with a young Hebrew, at that time staying in London; and that when her husband returned, he was, for some reason or other, so angry with his wife, that he put her away from him, and would never after see her, though he provided for her during her life, and himself educated the children she had borne up to the period of their parting. Now, though the latter part of this story is undoubtedly true, I would nevertheless caution my readers, gentle and simple, not to put too much trust in the former part thereof; remembering that husbands are husbands, and, from the beginning of the world to the present day, have been and are, a jealous and wayward race; and, moreover that the breath of slander will at times sully the brightest reputations; and, besides, that conclusions are too frequently drawn which the premises will by no fair means justify.

But be this as it may, Mistress Alice was a very handsome woman, and, as has been before said, very wealthy, for her father always petted her, and although he had two other children, sons, he quarrelled with them both and turned them out of doors, and very solemnly vowed he would disinherit them, and there is little doubt he would have kept his vow, but that they prevented him, the eldest, by being drowned in the Fleet river, and the other by getting murdered in an affray with the city watch. At the old man's death, therefore, he left all his property, real and personal, to his "deare daughter Alice," who was then twenty-one years old, and had lately been married for the first time in her life. She has been already introduced to the reader as a widow, and if he was tempted to be surprised at her being so young a one, what will he think when he reads that she was a widow for the fifth time?—ay, and was now on the eve of being married to her sixth husband—this was a Master Simon Shard a draper of Corne-hill, who had a well-filled purse, a rather corpulent figure, a round and ruddy face, and was about two and thirty years of age. It was said he had been enamoured of the fair Alice previously to her three last marriages but that he had not had courage enough to break his mind to her till some time after the death of her fourth husband, and when he did so he found she was engaged to her immediate forerunner, at whose death he again pressed his suite—was accepted, and they were married. After living for about six months on the most seemingly loving and comfortable terms, Master Shard was found dead in his bed, without any previous illness or indisposition: this was very strange, at least strange it will probably seem to the reader, though it was not so to Mrs. Alice's neighbours, for wonderful to relate, all her other husbands had died in the same way, and under the same circumstances. There had been from time to time many various opinions afloat upon this subject, and they had become more prevalent, stronger, and of longer lasting upon the successive deaths of each of her husbands. The most moderate had merely observed, that "for certes Mrs. Alice was a very unlucky, or a very lucky woman," according to the speaker's appreciation of wedlock: others looked very wise, and seemed to think a good deal, but said very little, generally contenting themselves with observing. "That it really was very odd;"

but again there were others, who—especially on the death of Mr. Shard's predecessor—declared that "such things were clean out of the common run of nature, and that either Mrs. Alice, or some one not to be named among Christians, must have bewitched her husband," (and here the speaker and listeners, especially if females, would devoutly cross themselves) "or else some thing or other" (also it seemed not to be made among Christians) "had carried them off in a very odd way, to say the least of it;" and to this cautious and mysterious opinion the generality of the last mentioned gossips with additional self-crossing, assented. Still however, Mrs. Alice's conduct was so, not only unobjectionable, but praiseworthy; she was so pious and charitable a woman, so good a neighbour, so kind a friend, and in short, both publicly and privately fulfilled all the domestic relations of life, in so exemplary a manner, that even the tongues of those who secretly envied her wealth, her beauty and may be her luck, had not as yet dared to wag in open scandal against her: but a sixth recurrence of so extraordinary an event, it would seem gave sudden loose to their hitherto confined scruples and tongues: or, perhaps the reason why they more freely vented their suspicions or their spite on the present occasion might be that Master Shard had been a man of great influence in the city—his connections stood high in the eyes of men, and he had a cousin who was sheriff at the time of his death, and who declared when he heard it, "by cock's marrow, he would see into the matter that very moment," and accordingly next morning, for he was just going to sit down to dinner when he made the above declaration, he presented himself with a *posse comitatus* at Mrs. Alice's door—and then the neighbourhood, as with one voice, spoke out against her; for their long held opinion of her (at least they said it had been long held) now found the countenance of power—her piety had been hypocrisy, and they had thought so all along—her charity ostentation,—her goodness and kindness, even those that had benefitted by them, now found some hole to pick in, and in plain and pithy English they called her a murderess.

While this was going on without Mrs. Alice's doors, another kind of scene was taking place within. The sheriff had been readily admitted, and was followed not only by the *posse of the county*, but by a *posse of the venue* (to use, I believe, a strictly lawful phrase,) consisting of all sorts of people, who either had or thought they had, or thought they should like to have some concern in the business. They found the widow by the bedside of her departed husband: she not only did not fly from but courted investigation, and accordingly the body was investigated, but not the slightest signs of violence was found upon it; no trace of steel or poison—all was as right and as unaccountable as it ought to have been. There were some present who pretended to a great knowledge of human nature, and who strictly watched Mrs. Alice during the whole transaction, and their evidence went still further to clear her from the imputation it was sought to affix upon her: for they said her conduct was so thoroughly natural—she seemed between indignation at the charge brought against her, and grief for the cause thereof; and yet there was no overacting in her grief, it seemed just what she would be likely to feel for the loss of such a husband, and to be rather sorrow for the spell that appeared to be upon her, than for the man himself. The sheriff and his friends therefore, whatever they might have thought or wished, found themselves forced to declare her guiltless; and after partaking of a slight repast, consisting of boiled beef, snet puddings, sausages, and ale, left the widow to her solitude. His declaration of her guiltlessness was soon known among her neighbours, almost all of whom without any delay or difficulty returned to their former good opinion of her, greatly pitying her for the trouble she had been put to, and much wondering how folks should be so spiteful as tell such wicked stories. In a few days orders were given for the burial of the late Master Shard in Mrs. Alice's family vault, which was in St. Michael's church, and which vault, though one of considerable extent, Mrs. Alice seemed in a fair way of filling chock full with her husbands.

St. Michael's church stood at the period of this tale, and for aught the teller knows to the contrary, stands to this day at the eastern end of Cornhill, and about midway between this church and Mrs. Alice's house there was a public-house or tavern, known by the sign of the "Sevenne Starres"; in the tap-room of this tavern, upon the afternoon when Master Shard was to be carried to his long home, there was assembled a very merry company of some dozen worthy citizens who were getting full of good things and gratitude towards the giver of the feast, Master Martyn Lessomour, a young merchant, whose safe return from a long and successful voyage in the Mediterranean they were met to celebrate. Master Lessomour was not yet thirty, though hard upon it; tall, strongly and well-built; his face was handsome and manly, and his large blue eyes looked like mirrors of his frank heart; his complexion was naturally fair, but exposure to sun and storm had given it a healthy tan, as they had also yet more bleached his light hair, which he wore long and curling down his neck and shoulders; in short he was altogether a comely young man to look upon, and the regne knew it too, for it was particularly observed of him that his carriage, which was at all times free and easy, would assume a little bit of a swagger when he either met in the streets, or passing under windows where were sitting any young and pretty city damsels. In his merry moods he was playful as a month-old kitten, as very a galliard as the best among them; but when business required it, he was as staid and sober as if an idle jest or an extra cup of canary had never passed his lips, so that he was equally well thought of among the grave and the gay; some of the oldest and wealthiest of the citizens would nod to him in passing, and some even went so far as to declare upon "Change," they believed young Master Lessomour would be a man well to do in the world, if "for they generally added a reservation, "if he only took care of himself and had good luck." They might indeed have been a little influenced in the formation of this good opinion, by the fact of his being the only heir and great favourite of a very rich and very old uncle. On the afternoon in question, he and his boon companions were at the height of their merriment, when one was sitting in the bay window, that jutted out into the street, observed the funeral of Master Shard approaching, and gave notice thereof to the others. The passing of a dead body being a solemn event, and they being orthodox Christians (according to the orthodoxy of those times) their merriment was therefore suspended, and I will not undertake to say there was not a share of curiosity mixed up with this religious feeling for they rose, one and all, and huddled into the window recess, in order to have a fair view of the funeral procession, which as matters went then-a-days was a very sumptuous one. Most of the party present being acquainted with the circumstances of the case at once recognized whose funeral it was, and the ignorant and anxious ears of Master Lessomour were greedily drinking in sundry marvelous tales of the rich widow of Cornhill, when she herself passed immediately by the window, looking becomingly downcast and sorrowful.

"Be she what she may," exclaimed my young merchant, "by the pillars of St. Hercules, she is a lovely wench, and steps out like an emperatrice."

"A witch, Master Martyn," replied one, the oldest of his companions, "a wicked witch is she, take an honest man's word for it, who should know something about such things."

"He is married to a shrew," said another, in an audible undertone, which produced a hearty laugh against the former speaker: in this, however, Master Lessomour did not join, nor with his companions who resumed their places round the well stored table, but

drawing a stool into the window recess, and taking a tankard of ale with him, he sat him down, intending, he said, to have another glimpse of the fair widow as she should return from the church; meanwhile, he requested the company to tell him something more about her as they seemed to know so much, and he nothing, having been so long away from home—and accordingly, Master Andrews (he who had boasted of his knowledge of such things, and was indeed reputed the most garrulous gossip in the parish) with the assistance and interruption of his companions, when they thought he had made enough of a good point, went through a relation of Mrs. Alice's life and adventures; and, which relation, divested of a considerable share of fiction with which Master Andrews had laden it, and put together, it is humbly hoped, in something of a more coherent manner, corresponded very nearly with that which has already been laid before the reader. During all this while, Martyn Lessomour spoke not a word, and when at length the narration was ended, he stepped his hand lustily on the window-sill, and cried out, "By the seven stars, and they are ruing ones now," casting up his eyes to the sign over the door, "but it is a strange tale—and whether true or false I will soon know—for if the mind of man hold good within me four and twenty hours, I will somehow or other scrape knowledge with this said witching widow."

At this observation, there was a general outcry, some declaring he would not do as he said, others that he could not; and some presuming on long intimacy with him, or on their greater advance in years, vowed he should not.

"And we'll see that, my merry masters, in an eye-wink," cried Lessomour, "for here comes the dame back as it to my wish;" and with that, to the no small wonderment of his friends, he started from his seat, and clapping his cap upon one side of his head, hurried out of the door, and posted himself on the middle of the path, whereon Dame Alice with a few attendants was returning: he staid there, till she came within two or three paces of him, and then drew back to make way for her—she looked up, and their eyes met, and, bowing as gracefully as he could, which was not indifferently, he drew back still further. Mrs. Alice turned with the intent to cross the road, but some horsemen riding by at the moment prevented her from doing so; whereupon Master Lessomour, stepping to her side, said "Fair dame, will you let a stranger do his poor duty here, and see you safe over." She curtsied, and accepted the arm he offered her; and after escorting her across the road, where they again exchanged courtesies, he left her, and joined his companions, who from the window had beheld with astonishment his bold gallantry. They conspired to attack him with a good deal of bantering and railery upon his exploit; but he was in such high spirits at the good success of it, and so well pleased with the way in which he had acquitted himself, that he fairly turned the tables upon them: or, if, literally speaking, he did not do that, they pretty nearly did it for themselves; for in the course of two hours there was not one of the party, with the exception of Master Lessomour, who was too merry to get drunk, and of Master Andrews, on whom liquor had no more effect than on a sponge, only making him heavy: with these exceptions, there was not one who did not turn himself under the table.

Martyn dreamed all night of the lovely widow, and rose next morning at the first break of dawn, and betimes to visit the widow. In due time they were married and lived very happily.

It chanced, however, that, as they were sitting together silently one evening upon a low stool or settle (in shape something like a modern settee, only with quaintly carved flange and elbows), gazing upon the dying embers of a wood-fire, that had been piled up between the brazen dogs on the brick hearth, that Mrs. Alice fetched a sigh.

"Why dost sigh, sweetheart?" said her husband; "art not happy?"

"I knew not that I sighed, dear Martyn," she said. "Certes, it was not for lack of happiness, for I am right happy."

"I am glad to hear thee say so, and think thou sayest sooth—if I may at all judge from mine own heart—for I am happier than I ever yet have been."

"And so, in truth, am I, Martyn—for I *am* happy now; and, indeed, I never knew happiness till I knew thee."

"Nay, now thou art surely cajoling me, sweetest. Meanest thou, thou wert never happy ere now?"

"I say, till I knew thee, never—never!" As she said this with great stress on the word *never*, Martyn, whose arm was girdling her, felt her shudder strongly, and he shook too.

"After a short pause, he resumed, "Diddst thou, then, not love thy other husbands, Alice?"

"Love them! No, Martyn—no; I hated them—hated them with a deadly hate." And at these words her face grew lividly pale, and her eyes fixed on her husband's with a strange and snake-like glistening, that his marrow thrilled again, and his heart beat quick. He spoke to her, however, in a meek voice, and said—

"Why didst thou hate them so, Alice?"

"Because that they were drunkards and faithless, Martyn; and, therefore, I hated them so; and, therefore, were it possible thou shouldst be such, I should even so hate thee, much, very much as I do now love thee." She uttered these words in a tone of deep tenderness, and fell weeping on his neck.

He strove, both by caresses and assurances, to soothe her; but it was some time before he could do so. The conversation was not resumed, and they retired to bed. But Martyn's mind continued very restless, and he lay awake long after his wife had gone to sleep; he could not dismiss her words from his brain, nor efface the impression they had made thereon; and, after turning the matter over a great many times, he came to the resolution that he would see a little more into the matter. At last he fell asleep, but it was only to wake soon from a wild dream. He thought him and his wife were still sitting on the low settle, as they had been that evening; and that their faces were lit up, as they then had been, by the fitful glimmering of the dying embers—that *her's* wore the same livid hue, and her eyes glistened in the same snake-like manner, that had then so frightened him; and that they were fixed, as then, upon him, and, though her look was most shocking, that he was fascinated by it, and could not move away his glance from her's; and her face kept growing paler and paler; and her eyes grew brighter and brighter, and more and more terrible; and he grew sick and sicker at heart, and felt a reeling in his brain, and a choking in his throat; and still he could not turn his eyes from her. And, behold! her long black curls, that hung about her neck and shoulders, seemed of a sudden, and yet slowly, to become insinuated with life; and, one by one, they uncurred themselves—some moving their ends to and fro, and up and down, as he had seen leeches do in a vase when they sought to fix their heads somewhere—others, again, twined themselves round the carved rail-work of the settle—while others, arching and stretching themselves out, twisted round his neck so tightly that they nearly throttled him. He woke up in alarm and agony, and found his wife's long hair, indeed, around his neck—and her arms, too; and her head was lying on his chest, and she was sobbing violently. He asked her what ailed her; and she said she had had a dreadful dream, all of which that she could recollect was that she had seen him murdered.

Martyn slept no more that night; and, the next morning, he rose betimes, and, pretending business, he went out at an early hour. Business, however, he had none. He walked forth at the Cripple-gate, and strolled through the Finsbury fields, and so away into the country, without any fixed determination or even knowledge of

whither he was going. It was a drizzly day, too; but he seemed unconscious of it, though he was soon drenched to the skin. But he kept walking about, thinking over the scene of the last evening, and all the stories he remembered to have heard of his wife from the day he first saw her, and all other stories he could remember ever to have heard respecting witches and their cunning, till he began to hold his wife for one in real earnest; or, if she was not a witch, she certainly was something else of an unusual nature, but what he could not just then bring himself to decide. Still he felt that he was not, somehow or other, safe with her, in spite of all her fondness for him; and reflecting upon her expressions of deep hate for her former husbands, and the cause whereto she had ascribed that hate, he conceived a design to try her love, which he determined upon carrying into immediate execution. It was long after sunset when he returned home, and he went straight to bed, pleading cold and weariness. The next day, he sat all the forenoon with his wife; but, in spite of her kindness and attentions, he could not overcome the disagreeable feeling that was upon him. He remained reserved, and almost sullen; and, at last, Mrs. Alice seemed infected with the same manner. At noon he left his house, and went straightways to Master Andrews, who lived not far off, with the purpose of inducing from him a recital of some of those marvellous tales wherewith he had, on a former occasion, regaled him. His purpose was, however, so far forestalled; for when he came there, he found he had some friends with him, and, of course, he was not anxious to make his wife's conduct matter of public talk. He sat, therefore, the whole evening nearly in silence; for which, however, they made full amends by their boisterous and drunken noise. He sat as late as any, and left with the full determination of putting his plan into effect that very night. On his way home, he trod casually upon a piece of apple rind lying in the path, and, slipping, fell in the mire. For it had been raining all that day too. At first he was not a little put out; but, after a little reflection, remembering that this very mischance might be made serviceable to his scheme, with disordered dress, bending knees, drooping mouth, and half-closed eyes (assuming, as much as he could, the bearing of a drunken man), he presented himself at his door. His wife, although it was now late in the night, had sent the servants to bed, and had herself sat up for him—a mark of attention that some very loving wives do at times pay to their husbands, often more to their annoyance than comfort. In the present instance, however, nothing could have happened more to Lessomour's wish. The moment his wife saw him, her face flushed even to darkness, and her large black eyes widened to a greater size, as she said in a tone half of anger, half of dread, "Why, Martyn, what is this? what has befallen thee?"

"I've been with some friends, my love," he replied, speaking thickly.

"Martyn! Martyn!" she answered, and bit her lip, and shook her head, "aget thee to thy bed; I will follow quickly."

He went accordingly; but it was some time before she did follow him, and she lay down by his side without speaking a word to him. He pretended to be asleep, though he did not really sleep all that night; nor more, he thought, did she—for she tossed about, and seemed very restless, now and then muttering to herself; and as soon as morning broke, she rose, and dressed herself, and left the room. The whole of that day he staid at home, feigning to have a bad head-ache. She was very attentive to him, but in no way hinted at his conduct of the foregoing evening. In two or three days he repeated the experiment, and with nearly the same success, saving that Mrs. Alice seemed a little more gloomy the following day. He tried it a third time, and a fourth, and that night she did not come to his bed at all. The next morning she spoke to him, for the first time upon the subject; she expressed more sorrow than anger—talked kindly to him—said she had hoped once, twice, and even thrice, that his coming home full of liquor might have been a mishap; but she now felt forced to fear that drunkenness was becoming an usage with him; and she begged him, with tears in her eyes, as he prized her happiness, to stop in good time, ere it did in truth become an usage. He was moved by her earnestness, and promised her, and, at the time, himself determined to disquiet her no farther on this head; but an impulse, which somehow he could not resist, urged him in a few days to break his word. Twice more his conduct called forth pressing entreaties from his wife—the last time, indeed, they were mingled with some reproaches: but it all was of no effect upon Lessomour, he continued in the career he had begun. The day after he had returned home, for the seventh time, in a pretended state of drunkenness, his wife said to him, "Martyn, I have prayed thee till I am weary: I now warn thee—take heed. As my husband, I owe thee love and duty; but I can pay neither to a drunkard. Heed my warning, or woe upon us both!"

And did Martyn still go on with the pursuit of his experiment?—He did. Although he saw it was losing him his wife's love, and winning him her anger—her hate—he went on, with an unswerving resolution, which, in such a cause, seemed obstinacy or madness, or worse. In the present enlightened age, I should not like to say he was bewitched, or to attribute to any supernatural influence the strong impulse which led him on to do as he was doing, in spite of his better sense and better feeling—in spite of the love he had unquestionably borne his wife—in spite of the danger which he felt he was thrusting himself into and feared; and yet I equally dislike to suppose that he was tempted to this severe trial of his wife's love and duty either by too great faith in them, or a want of it; though something, perhaps, of a similar nature was the trial to which Henry put his *Emma*, and *Poshonus* his *Inogene*; in neither case, indeed, so severe a one, nor, for his personal safety, may be, so dangerous; but, whatever might have been his motive, it certainly to himself was as inexplicable as he owned it to be irresistible. Again, therefore, he transgressed, and was again threatened: again he reiterated his offence; and then his wife said to him the next day, "Goes thou forth to-day, Martyn?"

"I must, indeed, Alice," he answered; "I have weighty business to do to-day."

"Then mark me, Martyn. I am not going to pray thee; but I have warned thee once, and I have warned thee twice, and I now warn thee for the third and for the last time. Go at thy risk, and see thou heed this warning better than thou have done mine others. Go not forth to-day, Martyn; or, going, come not back to me as thou hast been wont of late to come. Better that thou stay from me altogether; but better yet that thou stay *with* me altogether, Martyn."

"Nay, nay, I needs must go, Alice."

"There needs no plea, Martyn, but thine own will—thine own stubborn will—that will not bend to thy wife's prayer. Ay! I said I would not pray thee, but I do now. Look! see, Martyn! I am on my knees here to thee—and there are tears in mine eyes!—and, kneeling and weeping thus, I pray thee go not forth to-day. I have had dreams of late—dreams of bad foretoken, Martyn; and only last night I did truly dream that—" [Here she gulped, as if for breath.] "Thou wilt lose thy life, an thou go forth to-day, Martyn."

#### THE CATASTROPHE.

But Martyn Lessomour, like Julius Cæsar, was not to be frightened from a fixed purpose by a wife's dreams; and he answered her,—"Wife, wife, thou art a fearful woman, and makest me fear thee; but, natheless, I shall go."

"Go then," she said, and rose and left him; and he shortly afterwards went from the house—he returned in the evening in the same assumed state as before, and went to bed. For the last two days,

that he had played this part, since his wife had begun to use threats, Coroner, and the powers and duties of him and the jury he should have had gone when he left his own house, either to a friend's or a summon to the Inquest. Martin Lessomour lived to be a very old, and, as had been foretold of him, a very rich man—but he never was a happy one. A.

that he might lie awake during the night, to watch what his wife would do; but during this day he had not, for disquietude of mind, been able to sleep at all; but now that he was in bed, such a drowsiness came over him, that in spite of all his endeavours he soon fell into a sound sleep. From this he was aroused by his wife's getting out of bed; yet, although he at once started into thorough wakefulness, he had the presence of mind to pretend to be still asleep, and lay still and watched her. She had thrown a night gown around her—but her hair was loose, and hung struggling about her neck, and as she passed the foot of the bed, the light from a lamp that was burning on a table, fell through her locks upon her face, and Martyn saw that it was of that lived paleness, and that her eyes were brightened by that hateful snakelike look, which he had only once before beheld in reality, though in memory, thousands and thousands of times: he saw too that she held a small knife in one hand. Slowly and stilly, like a ghost, she glided on—but away from him; and going up to the place where she had hung her gown up when she undressed, she took it down and ripped open one of the sleeves of it, and took something out: she then went to the hearth, where there was a fire burning, for it was winter, and having laid the knife and whatever else she held in her hand, beside the lamp upon the table, she seemed searching for something about the hearth. At last Martyn heard her mutter, "Not here—how foolish—heedless of me—I must go and fetch it from below." She moved towards the door—Martyn's heart beat high within him, as he thought the moment she should be gone, he would leap from the bed and rush past her down the stairs, and out of the house—for he strangely felt to be alone would be more dreadful than to be in her most dreaded presence. She stopped, however, at the door—laid hold of the latch, but did not raise it—and continued in a low mutter, "Not here; mayhap it was for some good end that I forgot it—mayhap that I should give him one more trial yet—shall I? I shall—one more trial I will give thee, dear Martyn, dear still, though lost, I dread—one more—one more;" and saying this, she hurried back to her bed, and leaning her head upon Martyn's shoulder, sighed and sobbed, not loudly indeed, but as if her heart were cracking—and he—he lay dead still by her side, for he really feared to speak to her, even though it were to speak comfort; or when he thought of doing so, the remembrance of her word, "one trial more" stifled him—she seemed soon after to doze. In the morning he took care to rise before her, and woke her in so doing—he went up, as if by accident, to the table, and saw that beside the knife there lay a smallish round lump of lead.

"What is this for, Alice?" he said, in a careless tone—for he knew she was watching him.

"What is it?" she replied. He took it to her bedside. "That," she continued, "is a weight from the sleeve of my gown; I cut it out last night, to put in a smaller, for I find it too heavy."

Martyn laid it down, and presently left the room. It was some time before his wife joined him below stairs, and when she did at last come, her eyes looked so swollen and red, that Martyn was pretty sure she had been weeping; he said nothing about it, however, but in a few minutes rose, and took down his cap, and said, "I am bidden forth to dinner again to-day, Alice." "Good bye then, Martyn, good bye," was all her answer, and that was said in a low, very solemn, and yet kind tone of voice. He lingered in the room for a moment or two, in the hope she would say something more to him, for he felt less inclined to pursue his fraud that day than he had ever felt before; perhaps it was from a return of love he felt this, perhaps from fear—she said, however, nothing more, indeed did not seem to notice his presence; so after saying, "Well, good bye, Alice," he withdrew. He went at once to his next door neighbours, and requested them to hold themselves in readiness, in case he should want for their assistance in the night, for he had some idea, he said, that there would be an attempt to rob, or perhaps to murder him that night. This greatly alarmed his neighbours, and they promised to do what he requested, and the moment he had left them they sent for a reinforcement of their friends, and also begged of the sitting authorities that there might be an additional watch set in their neighbourhood that night.

Lessomour returned earlier by some hours than usual, and to his wonder, found his door was not fastened within. He entered, and called, but no one answered—he fastened the door, and went up to his bedroom, where he found his wife already in bed, and seemingly fast asleep:—this was the first time she had not sat up for him. He made a great noise, overturning stools and boxes, and sundry other things, and then cursing at them after the manner of drunken men—but his wife still seemed to sleep soundly; he spake to her, but she made no answer. Really believing she was asleep, he got into bed, and pretended himself to sleep, and to snore—still she lay quiet. For two hours after he got into bed she never moved; but then she quickly but silently slipped from the bed, hurried, but still without noise, to a stool near the fire, took from under one of the cushions a small iron ladle, and, what Martyn knew again for the leaden weight he had seen in the morning—this she put into the ladle, and kneeling upon one knee, set it upon the fire; in about a minute she turned her face to the bed, and then raised it up, and Martyn saw that though her features were frightfully writhen with bad passions, there were tears in her eyes that bespoke an inward struggle. She rose notwithstanding, and whispered—"Now—no flinching"—and walked up to the bed, with the ladle containing the molten lead in her right hand; and just as she brought this forward to pour in her husband's ear, he started up with a loud outcry, seized her hand and jumped out of bed, at the same time saying, "Shameless assassin! have I caught thee? Help, ho! help, neighbours! Help—murder!" Alice did not scream—nor start even—but stared in her husband's face, and with a strong effort freed her hand, flung the ladle into the fire, sank on a stool behind her, and hid her face in her hands. Lessomour continued calling for help, which call his neighbours, to do them justice, were not slow to obey—but to the number of two score and odd, well armed, they forced the outer door, and were hastening up the stairs. As they were close upon the bed-room door, Alice took her hands from her face, and with a hollow voice said—"Martyn Lessomour, before the ever living God, I am glad this hath so happened." Before he could reply, his neighbours and the watch were in the room, and upon his charge, seized his wife.

The next day the coffins of her former husbands were all opened, and in the skulls of each was found a quantity of lead, which had plainly been poured in through one of the ears. Mrs Alice was soon after tried upon the evidence of her living husband, and that of her dead ones, which though mute was no less strong. She would say nothing in her defence; indeed after the words she spoke to her husband in their bed-room on the night of her apprehension, she never uttered another: only, in the court, during her trial, when Lessomour was bearing witness that he pretended drunkenness to try what effect it would have upon her—when he swore to this, Alice, whose back had hitherto been towards him, turned rapidly round, fixed her glazing eye upon his, and uttering a shriek of piercing anguish, would have fallen, but that her jailer caught her in his arms; and that look and that sound Martin Lessomour never forgot to his dying day. His wife was found guilty of petit treason, and was burnt to death in Smithfield, according to the law of the land.

And so great a noise did this story make, that in the course of that year a statute was passed, more determinately to settle the office of

*From the Winter's Wreath.*

KESTER HOBSON.\*

A TALE OF THE YORKSHIRE WOLDS.

In a retired part of the Yorkshire Wolds, stood, some years ago, the Castle of Lounsbrough, an ancient seat of the noble house of Cavendish, which had long been in such a state of desertion and decay, that it has lately been thought expedient to demolish it altogether. At the commencement of the great civil war, on Sir Charles Liotham taking possession of Hull for the Parliament, it had been, for several years, a place of refuge for several wealthy royalists. For this reason, perhaps, or for some others more valid, a tradition had long prevailed in the neighbouring villages, that many hidden treasures had been discovered at different times, about the house and grounds of Lounsbrough Castle. The noble owners, of course, treated these rumours with contempt; and never took any steps for asserting their manorial rights, or investigating their supposed claims.

About the middle of the last century, the charge of the ancient domain was committed to a man of the name of Christopher Hobson, who, with his wife and two daughters, constituted its sole occupants. The females were employed in keeping the house in decent order, whilst Christopher, or as he was commonly called *Kester*, busied himself in the gardens and grounds,—so that in case of an unexpected visit from the noble owners, which sometimes

happened, the family were not wholly unprepared for their reception.

Kester Hobson was in the habit of spending two or three evenings a week at a small public-house in the adjacent village, where a few of the peasants and small farmers of the neighbourhood usually assembled. At the period we are speaking of, many of the lingering superstitions of the dark ages still maintained their ground in various parts of the kingdom, and in none did they keep their hold with greater tenacity than in the villages of the Yorkshire Wolds. At their fireside meetings, the conversation frequently turned on various old traditions respecting Lounsbrough Castle; and, amongst other legends equally veracious, it was affirmed that on one occasion, towards the close of the civil war, a band of round-head *Guerillas*, under Harrison, having suddenly surprised the castle, where some Baltic merchants from Hull, of the King's party, had taken refuge, the unfortunate cavaliers had been obliged to bury their money, and having afterwards made a desperate resistance, were all killed in defence of their precious deposits. So strong, however, was the attachment of these worthy traders to their beloved wealth, that even after death, their shadowy forms had often been seen hovering round the obscure places of the castle domain, like the ghosts of unburied heroes on the banks of Styx. Indeed it is well known to have been one of the most deep-rooted opinions of the *olden time*, that if any person had buried money or jewels during his life-time, his spirit could take no repose till the treasure was discovered. It may seem strange to some readers that, at this late period of history, there should have prevailed "such utter darkness in the land, and such gross darkness in the people;" but the author of this little narrative is well assured of their reality. *Haud ignota loquor.*

These oft-repeated and well-attested stories made a deep impression on Kester's mind; and often, whilst sitting alone in his chimney-corner, he would muse on these marvellous circumstances, and reflect with bitterness on his own misfortune, in being doomed to live in poverty amidst these countless hoards of wealth, and perhaps, day after day, to tread it under his feet, without being able to reach even a single noble,—but compelled to toil throughout his whole life for a miserable pittance of a few shillings a week. One winter's night, having retired to bed full of these melancholy thoughts, he fell into a deep sleep; and dreamed that a sober, business-looking man, with a ledger under his arm, and a pen behind his ear, appeared at his bedside, and, after giving him a solemn and sepulchral look, such as beseeemed a messenger from the tomb, delivered a portentous injunction to the following effect:—Christopher Hobson was commanded to depart immediately for London, and when arrived there, was ordered to walk backwards and forwards over London-bridge for an hour, on three successive nights, immediately after dark, during which he would hear of some very important event that materially concerned himself and family.

This vision was so much more vivid, consistent and striking than an ordinary dream, that

\* This legendary tale was related to the author by some of the older peasants of the Wolds; similar traditions have prevailed in many other places.—See "Fairy Legends," by T. C. CROKER, Esq.

it left a very deep impression on Kester's mind, and he thought of little else the whole of the following day. But though sufficiently superstitious, yet the expense and trouble of a journey to London, were at that time matter of such serious import, that he could not bring himself to resolve on so perilous an undertaking, on grounds which he could not help feeling to be rather equivocal. The next night, however, the same visitation was repeated, and in terms and manner still more awful and pe-remptory. His mind now became quite bewildered, and he began to think seriously that an admonition, thus solemnly repeated, could not with safety be disregarded. But on the third night the spectre again appeared, and delivered the same injunction with such an alarming and menacing aspect, that on awaking the next morning, Christopher hesitated no longer, but began instantly to make preparations for his journey. He told his family that an affair of importance, which he could not then explain, required his immediate presence in London; and begged them to defer asking any questions till his return.

He next applied to an old friend, a neighbouring farmer and a tenant of his master, for the loan of a steady old horse, which he had sometimes borrowed for short journeys; assuring him with a mysterious air, that he was going on an affair of great importance, in which, if he succeeded, the favour he was now asking should be amply compensated. He then took out from a small secret store, which had long been accumulating, a sum which he thought sufficient for the journey; and thus equipped and provided, he boldly set out for the metropolis.

Though the autumn was far advanced, and the roads consequently very bad, he arrived in town without any accident, and put up at a small inn in the *borough*, to which he had been recommended. Though he had never been in London before, he resolved to lose no time, but proceed immediately to business. The night after his arrival, therefore, he betook himself to the foot of London-bridge; and as soon as he heard St. Paul's clock strike seven, by which time it was quite dark, he commenced his walk, backwards and forwards over the bridge. He continued this exercise till he heard the same clock strike eight; when, having observed nothing more remarkable than the coming and going masses of a busy crowd of passengers, he returned to his hotel. He was not much disappointed at the ill success of his first essay, as two more nights still remained. The second night passed exactly like the first, and he began to be a little disheartened. He commenced, however, the labours of the third night with renovated hope;—but when he heard the deep-mouthed bell again toll eight o'clock, his spirits sunk within him. With a heavy heart he prepared to quit the bridge, inwardly cursing his own credulity, and the devices of Satan, who, he doubted not, had lured him on to this ill-fated expedition.

It may be necessary to remind some of our readers, that at the period we are speaking of, the entire length of London-bridge was flanked by two rows of houses and shops, and a great retail business was carried on in this singular

situation. On one of these shops, decorated by the sign of a Negro Boy with a pipe in his mouth, Kester Hobson happened to cast his eye as he was about to quit the bridge—and it reminded him that his tobacco-box was empty; for the necessities of established habit will duly recur, even amidst our sorrows and disappointments. He entered the shop, therefore, with a view of purchasing a small supply; and found behind the counter, an elderly sedate looking quaker, whose contented and well fed person indicated the prosperity of his calling. Whilst weighing the tobacco, he surveyed our Yorkshire man with some earnestness, and then, in a tone which expressed a sort of good-natured curiosity, accosted him as follows—"I have observed, friend, with some surprise, that for several nights thou hast employed thyself for a considerable time in walking to and fro across this bridge, and thy anxious looks seemed to expect something very particular; I am afraid thou hast been waiting for some person who has disappointed thee and failed in his engagement. If any advice or information of mine can be of use, as thou seemest to be a stranger in London, I should be glad to offer thee any assistance in my power." Our hearts are never more warmed than by an offer of kindness in a strange place and amongst strange people. Kester Hobson possessed perhaps a greater portion than usual of that mixture of simplicity and cunning, which has been so often ascribed to his countrymen, but though always a little on his guard, he was not quite proof against this open and disinterested kindness. He expressed his thanks very heartily, but declared he was quite ashamed to confess his business in London, and the nature of those night-walks which had excited the attention of the honest tobaccoist. By degrees, however, his inquisitive friend got out of him, that he had, in fact, been deeply mortified and disappointed: that he had expected to meet with a very particular person or occurrence on London-bridge:—and, in short, that he had undertaken a long, expensive, and laborious journey to London, merely at the instigation of a dream. He suppressed, however, his name and residence, from a vague apprehension, that such disclosure might by possibility expose him to ridicule, or to some other unpleasant consequence.

The quaker heard this strange confession with much surprise, and then replied with great solemnity. "It strikes me with astonishment, my good friend, that a man of thy decent and sober appearance should have come a journey of two or three hundred miles on such an errand as this! I thought such vain imaginations and weak superstitions had long since been eschewed by all men of sense, and abandoned to children and old women. It is deplorable to think that thy parents and instructors did not take care to root out all such idle fancies in early life, and then wisdom might peradventure have come with years and experience. However," continued he, "it does not become me to erect mine horn aloft, and look down upon the weak and ignorant, because my own lot has fallen in better places. If I have been hitherto enabled to turn aside from all such vain devices, is it not because

having been brought up, as it were, at the feet of Gamaliel, I have learnt from the lessons of a wise father the ways of truth and soberness? And yet," added he, smiling at Christopher, "I can assure thee, friend, that if I have constantly kept clear of all such delusions, it has not been for lack of temptation. I have, all my life long, been a great dreamer; and often my midnight visions have been so express and surprising, that it has required the strong arm of truth and reason to resist their allurements. Even this very last night, I was beset with this temptation. I dreamed that an elderly man, in a snuff-brown coat, with a pen stuck behind his ear, came to my bed-side, and told me, that if I went into a back garden, belonging to an ancient castle in Yorkshire, and dug the ground under the stone seat of an old Gothic summer-house, I should find a great treasure. Now," continued he, with a look of conscious superiority, "if I had been as foolish as thou, I might have neglected my business, and set off on a toilsome journey, in search of this imaginary treasure." Here Kester Hobson, who had thus far thought the good quaker's harangue rather prosing and tedious, began to prick up his ears, as the ancient poets express it; for he was well aware, that there was exactly such an old summer-house as this, in a retired garden, in the grounds of Lounsborough Castle. His countenance betrayed a visible agitation; but fortunately he stood in a dark part of the shop, where the light did not fall upon his face. He could hardly forbear shouting with exultation; but, by a violent effort, he suppressed his emotion, and replied as indifferently as he could, that it was true he had indeed been guilty of a great weakness, but he hoped he should be wiser for the future.

It is useless to say that Kester treasured up this momentous information carefully in his mind, and soon after took leave of his valuable friend. "We shall soon see," thought he exultingly, "which of us two is the wiser man in his generation." The next day he took his departure for Yorkshire, and in about a week reached his home in safety. On the very night of his arrival, he dismissed his family to bed in good time, telling them that he had some accounts to settle, which required him to be alone. When the household was all sunk in repose, he took a spade and a lantern, and repaired in silence to the old summer-house. He removed the stone seat, took up the pavement, and after digging about three feet deep, he felt the spade strike against some hard substance. His nerves were all agitation,—but he went on, and soon drew out a large earthen jar, of the capacity of about half a bushel, fastened with a wooden cover. He eagerly broke it open, and found it quite filled with the gold coins of the reigns of Elizabeth, James the First, and Charles the First. He instantly conveyed it home, and got it safely locked up in his desk without the least appearance of interruption.

Kester Hobson's wife was, like himself, famous for prudence and reserve;—and to her, therefore, but not to his daughter, he determined to reveal the secret. They used their treasure cautiously and discreetly, so as to avoid particular remark or conjecture; and he often laughs in his sleeve at the good quaker's

sage discourse, and airs of lofty superiority. He thought himself dispensed from making any disclosure to his noble master; for, though a man of fair character, and reasonably honest when temptation did not press him too hard, yet, on the present occasion, he thought all he had got was the fair reward of his own acuteness and perseverance. J. M.

**ANECDOTE OF BUCKINGHAM.**

**R**UPERT MAYLING is a name well known to English chronicles. About the era to which our history refers, its proprietor was a gentleman and a cavalier, who had retired to his paternal demesne a few months after the accession of the second Charles. The restored Stuart, too merry and light-hearted to endure the burden of meditating on unpaid and, perhaps, unpayable obligations, had a convenient facility of dismissing the opposing circumstances altogether from his memory.

Mayling was foolish enough to take disgust at this happy talent of the sprightly monarch, and to conceive a witless resentment at the little consideration with which himself, and others of similar condition, were passed over by the royal prodigal, as though neither estate nor limb had been endangered in his father's service : and yet many of them bore undecaying marks of toils endured, and rents forfeited. There was a sad lack of the complement of limbs naturally appertaining to their corps ;



and, to confess the truth, the fine gold was tarnished on many a faded doublet. New favourites and new names engrossed the royal ear and bounty; and the brave Mayling "of that ilk," retired to the despoiled mansion of his forefathers, to live out his life just on the existing side of starvation.

At Mayling Castle there was a terrible reduction of the appointments befitting its magnitude and external pretensions. Indeed, if the truth must be told, the major part of its suites of apartments were consigned to the tenantry of those naturalised depredators, rats, mice, bats, and other *reptilia*. The cavalier and his daughter occupied five of the smaller rooms, all opening upon what had once been a noble gallery of pictures. Each had an appropriate nook, which modern language denominates a *boudoir*, if sometimes they should prefer—and who, with the power of hope and memory, has not occasionally preferred?—self-communings, and indulged day-dreams and Utopian creations, bright and beautiful enough to out-paradise Eden.

The cavalier, however, curtailed as his income was—the shadow of a shade—the fraction of a decimal—to speak comparatively—had preserved, in all its unimpaired luxuriance and vigour, and perhaps in stronger manifestations than prosperity would even have elicited, his pride of family. He stood the higher from every fresh shock of adversity, like a tree that shoots forth yet loftier branches, after braving the tempest. His small and faithful household served him with the exactest mimicry of his former state, and fostered, by their devotedness, his internal consciousness of hereditary greatness. More a sovereign than the master whose ingratitude he bore in haughty silence, he ruled with an unresisted sway the few attendants that lived in the shadow of his adversity. In his little realm there was but one rebel to his authority—one before whom he himself bowed with the utter

prostration of doting fondness. And then, that dominion was so sweet and graceful—the golden sceptre was so admirably wielded—its glitter delighted so much more frequently than its weight oppressed—that liberty itself might have fallen in love with bondage, and hugged the chains which were wreathed so prettily.

She was the loveliest of tyrants—that fair, noble, glorious creature, the proud and *piquante* Mistress Anabel. Her stature was fit for royalty; but its magnificence was softened by outlines so beautifully delicate, and limbs so exquisitely moulded—so elastic, so symmetrical. She had that rich brown complexion which poets and painters love to represent, deepening on the cheek into carnation richness. And her mouth—no matter for the dispute on the feature capable of the greatest expression—was the most musical-looking mouth in the world, with its full lips of ruby redness, and its saucy accompaniments of smiles and dimples. Her nose was almost aquiline—just sufficiently raised to give a shade of pride to her countenance. In short, why dwell thus on each separate feature? for neither pen nor pencil can faithfully pourtray the charm of that ever-varying animation, which rendered her the proudest, sweetest, tenderest, haughtiest, stateliest, most playful beauty in the universe.

So she grew up and flourished, amongst other fair flowers, beneath the shadow of the beautiful wilderness of Mayling Castle. Sometimes, peradventure, wondering whether aught brighter or sweeter lay beyond its precincts; but generally so occupied with her own intense consciousness of existence, and the occupations she made for herself in that world of legendary lore which constituted the **ghost** of her father's whilome library, that, to her imagination, the world insensibly shrunk to the small spot of territory visible to her senses, and endeared to her affections, as furnishing haunts for every whimsical creation of her wild fancy. She would not, she vowed, be other



than she was, for all the wealth of the new Spanish universe ; unless, indeed, she might be the sovereign of those golden realms, and bear unresisted sway over all they contained. The proud beauty knew submission but by name, and would have laughed to scorn the luckless mortal who spoke of it as a thing befitting the whole race of womankind ; and therefore even that self-willed spirit which knew not, and brooked not, the gentlest control.

The bright and richly-gifted rose of Mayling was not long enforced to fling her sweetness on the heedless gale, or to exhibit her loveliness to her favourite and unappreciating fawn alone. It is true that the echoes of her father's halls were not awakened by those gay and gallant revellers who sunned themselves within the circle of the court ; but there were gentlemen of no mean name occasionally riding on the public side of the enclosure that skirted his whilome park, now converted into a pasture : and Anabel loved to mount her steed, the only thing she possessed of value suited to her birth ; and, followed by a squire, grown grey in her father's service, to aim at outstripping the wind ; gathering additional beauty and health and animation from the exercise. It was an attractive sight to look upon the grace and courage of that fair creature,—the sparkle of her eye—the warm bloom of her cheek—the firm compression of her lips, and the pretty anger that sometimes added to the energy of her expression, as she excited her steed to feats which try the mettle of the most practised rider. Her brave leap over the park-gate brought her, for the first time, within the view of Sir Philip Trevor ; and if afterwards accident sometimes renewed their meeting there, it was but the threading of those intricate mazes, through which man and woman are led by an invisible hand, to take the *role* allotted to each in this great drama of human life.

Sir Philip had the rare good for-

tune to preserve his fidelity, to his sovereign unimpeached, and his paternal estate at the same time uninjured. He was neither mean nor prodigal ; he lived as became his high rank, but he wasted nothing on vices from which his principles preserved him. He had a noble mansion and a stately retinue—an unsullied name, and an irreproachable life. His figure was agreeable, his address a courtier's. What wonder then at forty, wooing the fair, portionless Anabel, her father's smile bade him be a thriving suitor, and so win her !

The maiden *was* won : and starting at once from the shades and privations of her paternal roof, into the broad glare of almost illimitable wealth and splendour, is it to be marvelled that she was sometimes dazzled with the brightness of her undarkened lot ?

Her beauty was of that regal character, which seems to receive new lustre from external decoration. In the gay circle of Charles's court, adorned with silken embroidery, and reflecting a prism of radiance from her variously-coloured gems, she moved as one born for courts alone, and all unsuited to the privacy and retirement of less stirring scenes. The theme of poets and the realisation of the painter's *beau ideal*, by natural consequence she became also the object of the passion of those lawless lords and profligate gallants who revolved within the sphere of Charles the Second. Frank, unsuspecting, and confiding, she received the homage as a merited tribute to her own gifts and graces ; and preserved her train of adorers by means of the very pride which was at once her security and the safeguard of her virtue.

But neither security nor conscious integrity afford any defence from the attacks of envy. Scandal, with her hundred tongues, found an unceasing theme in the actions of the beautiful and incautious Anabel. It is well known that, within the immediate circle of Charles's court, there

was no rigorous censorship of female conduct. Airy, frivolous, sprightly, and superficial gallantry, was the special occupation of the courtiers of both sexes. If the proud, and occasionally scornful, Lady Trevor, had fallen regularly into the ranks of her new associates, she might have pursued her track unadmonished by an invidious comment, unchecked by observation, under the convenient shelter of the prevalent fashion. There was one broad mark of distinction between herself and her contemporaries, which none of them could pardon—she was a coquette, as they were: her original simplicity somewhat sophisticated—her wit sometimes less cautious than formerly—her archness more alluring—her attire more voluptuous;—but she was a loyal wife! and women faithful to the conjugal tie, hated her chastity even more than her beauty.

She had been selected as a prize by an eye, whose keenness generally carried its arrows unswervingly to his intended prey. She had laughed at the temptations offered by royal gallantry, and had publicly ridiculed the munificence of princely prodigality. Such an attack, Envy whispered, was the less formidable, inasmuch as the heart might reasonably be presumed to be untouched; and pride, her maligners affirmed, was, in her, stronger than vanity. But when at length, the dangerous, the elegant, the irresistible Buckingham, laid his train,—love itself was the ally to be pressed into his service, and to soften into tenderness and passion, that obduracy which strengthened itself against every approach of meaner and baser feelings.

And the lively beauty did sometimes carry her coquetry to such lengths as fed the hopes of Buckingham, and augmented his presumption in exact proportion to the deepening cloud which hung upon the brow of Sir Philip Trevor. He was the most honourable of men and the fondest of husbands, relying on his wife's tenderness and gratitude to preserve in her such reverence for his name

and reputation, such reciprocal affection as would keep her unscathed by the flames that played around her.

"Anabel," he said to her one evening, on their retirement from the court revels, "Anabel, is your head clear enough to answer soberly and in truth the simple question,—Wherefore did you marry me?—or to be somewhat more explicit, plainly, did my name and my station tempt you to leave your father's solitude for these gayer scenes, or had you aught of such feeling for me as, in faith, Anabel, had it, at this present hour, been yet in thy power to make thy choice, after the incense thou hast been receiving from him whom one must not lightly name, or more closely from his minion, would thy heart still have led thee to the arms of Philip Trevor?"

"And, if my heart had not, what should, Sir Philip?" said the lady, firmly, and the proud blood stained her cheek, and the haughty spirit waved her up-raised eye with lightning.

"In good faith, Anabel," replied the cavalier with an air of determination, as if resolved to maintain a position he had assumed with a great effort of courage,—“I have heard that, to a woman's taste, a gay and crowded court is no bad exchange for retirement,—splendour for obscurity,—the silver voices of gallants, for the unmusical notes of bats and night-birds.”

"And the affection of an approving father, for the taunts of a sarcastic husband," interrupted the lady bitterly, her complexion still deepening at the storm her proud passions increased. "That is about the climax of the blessed exchanges I have made, Sir Philip Trevor;—and if it be your meaning that I should stoop to the dust before you, because forsooth, these armlets, and collet, and pendants, and head-gear, and rings, and loops, and brooches,"—taking with disdain from her person each separate ornament, as she enumerated it,—“are somewhat

heavier and better calculated for the dazzling of a child's eye, than the wreaths of wild flowers which used very well to satisfy mine, why then, fair Sir, most sadly, I trow, are you mistaken ;—for I declare to you by mine own honour and my dear father's unsullied name, that Charles's crown of England, his very jewel of Britain's self, should win from me no lowlier homage, than it befits his station to demand, and comports with my unblemished fame to yield."

Such a declaration counteracted the effect which a similar exhibition of haughty and violent temper might otherwise have produced on the husband's mind. His love rose immediately above the cloud which jealousy had thrown over it, and he attempted to sooth and caress the angry charmer, whose beautiful form was even yet panting with the uncontrollable emotion of vindictive feeling.

The angry lady indignantly flung from him ; and rejected with contempt all his overtures of reconciliation. Subdued by an untamed temper, she passed that restless night in unappeasable anger against the being of all the world the dearest to her heart.

Following the dictates of her own unbending pride, she exchanged her former confidential communications with Sir Philip, for a reserve which left him ignorant of each day's plans of action. By necessary consequence, he no longer afforded libertine courtiers the opportunity of accosting him with a passing banter, as "my lady's shadow." They were seen together unfrequently ; and Buckingham's practised eye detected the moment favourable to the pressing of his suit, whilst his unhallowed passion increased in equal proportion. That which seemed scarcely appropriated by any, might, he argued, be attempted with impunity by all.

Acting on this maxim, his suit became daily more unequivocal, and the lady discovered that all the manoeuvres of her coquetry were utterly

insufficient to evade the impassioned declaration of lawless love which her own unguardedness had incurred. Her pride and her purity, in this instance, acting as auxiliaries, combined to arouse her judgment to a full conviction of the danger of her personal position, and to awake longing regrets after that happy time, when the confidence between herself and her husband had been mutual and unbounded.

"The kindest of men he was !" thus she held colloquy with herself ; "the noblest, the most forbearing, the most confiding !—thou foolish Anabel, to trample on so true a heart,—to weary so generous a spirit ! And for what ?—to gratify, not thy taste—for *that*, thanks to the truth and reality of the beautiful companions of thy childhood, the unchanging hills, and the green earth, and the everlasting forests, and the blue arching sky, and the swelling floods,—*that*, at least, detected and derided the artifice and falsehood which shroud the deformity of a courtier's mind, as his state-robe adorns his person !—Nor thine understanding—bestowed to elevate thee above the level of folly and trifling, to pursue steadily a higher object than even the best and the brightest of this goodly world !—Nor thy passions—for, if thou wert defiled even in thought, could *I* live to speak it ?—Nor the vacuum of an unoccupied heart ; for has thy husband's image been, for one moment, degraded from its sanctuary there ?—And thou hast wearied that forgiving heart of his into obstinacy, and trampled on that warm and loving spirit until, perhaps, it may now be indifferent to thy returning duty !—But, let us try ;—even yet I hear him pacing his anti-chamber ;—let me, at this moment, put to the test, the real value of those witcheries which the hollow world has so much lauded !"

Thus determining, the fair creature wrapt her ermined mantle round her, and crossed the gallery to her husband's apartment. She tapped

lightly at the door ; so, lightly, indeed, that the throbbing of her heart was more audible. It was opened, and the next instant, she stood alone in his presence.

The moment had arrived ;—the moment which, she believed in her soul, was to be the immediate precursor of tender and complete reconciliation. And yet, at this crisis, when, if ever, it was really to avail her, her natural eloquence utterly forsook her. She, whose words had won senators, and whose proud nobility of demeanour had awed a monarch, was silent, abashed, intimidated, before him, whose existence had so recently appeared dependant on her smile.

Perhaps it was but the operation of that womanly pride, which feels it a humiliation to *seek* reconciliation, even with an offended husband.

Sir Philip himself was, for a second, disconcerted by her entrance ; but he speedily recovered his self-command.

“What now, Anabel ?” said he, encouragingly ;—“speak fearlessly thy wishes and thy wants. Dost thou envy some court-beauty a rich pattern of brocade ? or hast thou set thine heart upon a sparkling carcanet which mocks thy brightest gauds ? Is it money or gems thou wouldst have ? They are thine, if my means limit thy wishes.”

“And wilt thou truly give me that gem most coveted by mine eye and heart, Philip Trevor ?” said the enchantress, laying her fair hand on his shoulder, and bending gently her graceful neck, whilst she raised her radiant eyes to his face, with such a mingled expression of archness and tenderness, as she had proved, in other instances, to be irresistible.

It boots not to enter into the minute details of a scene, interesting principally to the actors, and deriving its claims to admiration chiefly from those graces of countenance and gesture which fall to the painter’s, not the historian’s, province. It may be sufficient to record, that, although Sir Philip and his lady spent the wa-

jor part of the next morning in a *tête-a-tête* airing, the fair Anabel shone not a whit the less brilliantly in the evening as the star of the court-circle ; and, indeed, she received the attentions of Buckingham with more encouraging graciousness and animation than ever.

There shone that night as fair a moon as ever lighted a lover to the feet of his mistress. All was still round the mansion of Sir Philip Trevor, save the echoing footstep of a passenger, who was pacing under the shadow of its garden-wall, with the enforced regularity of a sentry on guard. Occasionally he paused, and looked up to the sky above him, as if desirous of reading, in the aspect of the planets, the issue of his present adventure. Then he resumed his perambulations with apparent satisfaction, pleased with the result of his celestial inquiries ; and then anon he paused again, and bent his ear earthward, to catch the coming sound of expected feet. Beautiful as was the garniture of the heavenly vault that night, he was not so absorbed by the contemplation of it, as to be inaccessible to the incessant attacks of a keen northeast wind ; which, blowing sideways upon him, he could by no means escape. He drew his large, heavy, servile cloak closely round his person ; but the subtle wind penetrating it, still cut him keenly.

Minutes passed away ; and to him who waits, even a second is a very marked interval of time. Occasionally he hesitated, whether he should not boldly proceed to the grand entrance, and seek admission. But that would betray a lady’s secret—a measure ill-befitting the first courtier of Charles the Second’s court ; especially in the very outset of his enterprise, when he had but just brought the fortress to *hint* at capitulation. Sometimes he was on the point of abandoning his design entirely ; but to retire merely for a keen wind and an hour’s watching, was to undergo the shame of being baffled by no tolerably sufficient

causes. And the eyes of his world had been so fastened on the progress of his present adventure, that he felt half his reputation for successful galantry was staked on its result. No—he held victory almost in his grasp, and he could not voluntarily resign it for mortification and defeat.

Two hours had elapsed since the chimes of the adjacent church had tolled the appointed time. A less determined suitor would have deemed that some unpropitious circumstance had marred his hopes, and would have retired accordingly. Not so Buckingham; in his heart he vowed that the full-risen sun should find him there, ready to seize the first who passed those gates; and to force from him information of all that had occurred within during the night, which had brought such disappointment. Angry, and suspicious of some evil design, his unequal steps betrayed the state of his feelings; when a small private door, deeply set in the wall, opened! and a cautious voice whispered the word “*L’amour!*”

“*C’est le diable!*” muttered the gallant; and somewhat raising his voice, he added—“By St. George! I believed myself forgotten, or following a false lure!”

“No, by my troth, my good lord!” returned the *soubrette*, in low tones. For the matter of *forgetting*, my lady has thought of nothing else these last long three hours!—and as to falseness—I say nothing—but could your lordship hear her sigh, as I have done!—her pretty eyes glittering, as I may say, like dew-drops in the morning! ‘Oh, Villain!’—says she,—meaning your Grace—‘oh, George Villain!’—and then she wipes away the tears withal—and looks so piteous—in sooth, ’twould do your lordship’s heart good to see and hear all.”

Buckingham had been for a moment startled at the waiting-woman’s illegitimate reading of his patronymic. Always acute, he had doubted whether it were the effect of ignorance or malice;—but the evident

simplicity of his coadjutrix, as she stood with an inclined head, twirling her thumbs and courtseying at every sentence, restored his confidence.

“In a word,” said he, impatiently, “is the cause of my long detention here removed?—Conduct me to your lady;—for, *mort de ma vie!* my teeth chatter as in an ague fit, and I would not stand here five minutes longer for the fairest princess in Christendom.”

The damsel spoke no more, but led him onwards in obedience to his injunction, signing to him to preserve constant silence. Buckingham scarcely needed the injunction;—he was too practised in wariness to trust his own voice on these occasions.

By windings more intricate and circuitous than a plain-dealing man might have approved, Buckingham was conducted by his cautious guide to the apartment where the beautiful Anabel expected him. It was a small, plainly-furnished closet, lighted by a single lamp, whose feeble rays left one part of it involved in shadow. There was nothing particularly attractive in the scene of reception itself: but the lady was adorned in the most seductive garb, sanctioned indeed by the taste of the age, but exhibiting more of her person than she had ever ventured in her public appearance; for she had been remarked for a delicacy in her fashion of dress, which had been supposed an effect of the strictness of her less youthful husband. The prohibition evidently was disregarded now, and the suitor drew the happiest augury from it. He kissed the fair hand which welcomed his entrance, and gazed with undisguised admiration on the most graceful neck in the world. Anabel blushed deeply; but whether the producing cause was love, or shame, or indignation, was a question to be subsequently decided.

She took her place at a small table, and motioned to the lover to seat himself near her. Smilingly, and in perfect content, he obeyed—careful-

ly selecting a position, which permitted him to enjoy unrestrained contemplation of that exquisite beauty in whose radiance he was basking.

All the *hauteur* of Anabel had vanished. She appeared to surrender herself entirely to that liveliness of imagination, which imparted so much witchery and archness to her countenance. Inspired by her animation, Buckingham's wit became every moment more brilliant, and his whole mind intoxicated with assurance of ultimate success. Wine was brought by the *confidante*, and he quaffed a goblet of the sparkling juice with the avidity of a man imbibing a new source of vivacity and delight. His spirits acquired strength every minute, and it was evident that they were rapidly attaining that point when they overmaster reason.

At this moment a figure enveloped in a dark cloak, his face almost shrouded by his hat, advanced a step from the recess which had hitherto completely concealed him in its depth of shadow.

Buckingham had no eye, no attention, for aught beyond the circle of the light that shone around the object of his devotion. His hand, to aid by its action the force of his oaths, was emphatically raised, when the soft white fingers of Anabel pressed it.

"'Tis a pretty bauble, this ring which you wear!" she said, with the most bewitching playfulness. "Suppose I take it as a pledge of your truth, my protesting lover; and wear it until I have to mourn your falsehood; and return it when your truant heart would bestow itself elsewhere. By my faith! 'twere better displayed on my finger than on your's."

"'Tis the gift of Charles,"—said Buckingham, earnestly—"a kind of talisman, by which I hold his favour. He has sworn to me, that while the jewel leaves me not, neither shall his friendship."

"What!" said the lady, assuming anger, "dost thou refuse me the worthless tribute?—thou, who hast

even now vowed to Heaven that thou would'st sacrifice life and limb at my behest? False man! where is thy truth, and wherein thy word's value? Nay—and if Charles himself is preferred to me—if thou holdest thy prince's favour at a price above thy mistress', marvel not that she should disdain a heart so disloyal to love, so prodigal of promise, and so very poor of performance!"

"Upon mine honour, fairest, sweetest, Anabel! I will give thee one of ten times its value!" replied he, endeavouring to soften her. "In good truth, it is not worthy my giving, nor thy acceptance. It is not a jewel of fine water—the gold is alloyed. Nay, nay—so base a gift were but sorry homage to thy charms. Thou shalt have the best that London can produce."

"Nay, but in sooth and by my faith, I will have none but this," returned Anabel, resuming her seductive sportiveness, and with yet greater archness almost drawing off the ring:—"I will play Portia with thee, and say that—"

For your love, I'll take this ring from you.  
Do not draw back your hand—I'll take no more;  
And you, in love, shall not deny me this!

Charles himself had given me his kingdom for half this pleading," and the ring by this time had travelled from his finger to her's.

"In the words of the oracle of old, thou art invincible," said Buckingham, pressing with his lips the taper finger now encircled by the disputed jewel.

At this instant there was a noise of footsteps and voices in the adjoining apartment. Anabel rose in alarm just as her attendant entered, and announced the arrival of Sir Philip.

"Leave me without one moment's delay," said the lady, in great distress;—"nay, pause not,—question not,—tarry not;—he comes—we are lost;—go, go—follow Lettice—what would'st thou?—at the next midnight return.—There—there—no more parlançé;—obey."

The next evening was the anni-

versary of Charles the Second's return to England. An entertainment unusually splendid celebrated it. The flower of Britain's bravest and fairest were collected there, and a thousand lamps shed brilliancy over the splendid circle.

In queen-like magnificence, the peerless Anabel stood, in the pride of her pre-eminent beauty, near the monarch. She was supported by the arm of her husband, whose grave dignity and graceful nobility of demeanour, marked him as the fitting guardian of one so young and fair. A throng of courtiers were gathered round them, and there was much whispering in various groups, for which this distinguished pair evidently afforded a theme. Sir Philip pressed the fair arm that leaned upon his, and the frequent coupling of the names of Trevor and Buckingham, which rose upon their ears, seemed by no means to interrupt the harmony between them.

At length the circle of courtiers opened, and made way for Buckingham's approach to the royal seat. He was attired with more than ordinary splendour,—a very galaxy of jewels. His face and form had never appeared to greater advantage;—the heart of many a fair one present beat quickly, and there was probably not a maiden in that circle, however distinguished for birth or fortune, who would not have deemed the proffer of his alliance an honour, if not a condescension.

Charles, as usual, applauded his favourite's magnificent taste.—“Thy colours are infinitely well chosen,” said the monarch, “and thy jewels arranged in a manner not to be spoken against. Thou art certainly the pink of judicious taste, and as usual may bid defiance to criticism. Unglove, George; and shew me how thou honour'st the pledge of thy master's favour by bringing it into such goodly company.”

The words of Charles were distinctly heard by the neighbouring courtiers, and amongst the rest by Sir Philip and the fair Anabel.

Their eyes were fastened on the embarrassed favourite, and his glances soon mingled with theirs. There was a silence through the whole of that circle, which heightened the confusion of Buckingham.

“What means this?” said Charles, laughing, perhaps in spite of his will. “Thou canst not be ashamed, George, of thy king's present; and if thy carelessness has lost it, we will punish thee by commanding thee to unglove without further delay.”

“In faith, my liege,” said the Duke, slowly drawing the embroidered covering from his hand,—“the loss of the jewel has entirely discomposed me these twelve hours. I wot not, indeed, what is become of it, but I have taken every pains to ensure its return; and if these fail me, I can but throw myself on your majesty's known clemency for pardon, and, indeed, pity for my misfortune. It must have been stolen whilst I slept, for I call heaven to witness——”

“Have done with thy protestations, George,” said the monarch, laughing without restraint. “We will engage that our royal command shall procure the ring for thee as quickly as thou didst lose it. Exhibit the trophy of discretion, fair Armida,” he added, and Anabel advancing with her husband, laid the ring at his feet.

“I know not,” said the monarch, “whether it were not safest in your keeping, Lady Trevor, were we willing to do George Villiers so much grace as to consign it still to the guardianship of the fair hand on which he placed it. Doubtless he passed its circlet round that taper finger, with the elegance and courtly bearing for which we hold him peerless.”

“As clumsily as the meanest varlet in your majesty's household,” replied the lady quickly. “May it please you, sire, the Duke, in assuming his meanest page's holiday suit, adopted that page's every-day manners withal. His eyes were fixed on



mine with a most luckless affectation of admiration, not to say love, and his mouth wore such a simper as your majesty's jester might have envied. One hand lay spread upon his knee,—habituated perhaps so to defend the honourable badge he had, for that night, laid aside ;—the other courted alliance with mine, and left yonder trophy in its keeping. Meanwhile, my lord of Buckingham's power of sight was so completely under my direction, that he was not for one moment dismayed by the apparition of my husband, whose post, during our interview, was some paces behind my chair."

"'Fore George, the lady's tongue hath punished thee, properly, Villiers ;—thou shalt never hear the last of this !" said the monarch, throwing himself back on his seat to indulge his merriment. "Was there ever aught so crest-fallen as yon hero?" he asked of his courtiers, and peals of laughter resounded through the circle, always ready to fall into the vein of the moment.

"Come, resume the jewel, George ; and henceforward keep it more carefully,—or, at least," he added in a half whisper,—“part not with it again to endanger the repetition of a scene like this.”

Mortified—humiliated ;—the favourite, affecting to carry the matter bravely, obeyed the royal mandate. Charles directed the general attention to other objects, and the adventure ceased, from that moment, to be a subject of public discussion. The monarch afforded evidence of his recollection of it, only by the increased and respectful preference he always exhibited to the beautiful Anabel and her husband, whose conjugal harmony no subsequent event ever disturbed.

Though no longer openly alluded to, Buckingham's discomfiture lived in the remembrance of all. And many a husband found a talisman powerful to check the influence of the insidious favourite over the heart of his wife, in the utterance of the name of *Anabel Trevor* !

## CURIOUS HISTORY OF LONDON BRIDGE.

*Chronicles of London Bridge.* By an Antiquary. Post 8vo. pp. 687. London, 1827. Smith, Elder, and Co.

"We will but just touch upon the Saxon Ferry and Wooden Bridge, and then come at once to the first stone one, founded by the excellent Peter of Colechurch, in the year 1176. I would you could but have seen the curious boat in which, for many years, Audrey the ship-wight, as the Saxons called him, rowed his fare over those restless waters. It was in form very much like a crescent laid upon its back, only the sharp horns turned over into a kind of screw; and when it was launched, if the passengers did not trim the bark truly, there was some little danger of its tilting over, for it was only the very centre of the keel that touched the water. But our shipman had also another wherry, for extra passengers, and that had the appearance of a blanket gathered up at each end, whilst those within looked as if they were about to be tossed in it. His oars were in the shape of shovels, or an ace of spades stuck on the end of a yard measure; though one of them rather seemed as if he were rowing with an arrow, having the barb broken off, and the flight held downwards. It is nearly certain, that at this period there was no barrier across the Thames, for you may remember how the '*Saxon Chronicle*,' sub anno 993, tells you that the Dane Olaf, Anlaf, or Unlaf, '*mid thyrn hundnigentigon scipum to Stane*,'—which is to say, that 'he sailed with three hundred and ninety ships to Staines, which he plundered without, and thence went to Sandwich.'"

It is generally agreed, that there was a wooden bridge\* over the Thames at London at least as early as the year 1032, erected probably soon after this Danish expedition in 993; but before coming to its successor of stone, built by Peter of Colechurch, in 1176, we must lighten our antiquarian load with the legend of John Overs, the famous ferryman.

"Before there was any bridge at all built over the Thames, there was only a ferry, to which divers boats belonged, to transport all passengers betwixt Southwark and Churchyard Alley, that being the high-road ways betwixt Middlesex, and Sussex, and London. This ferry was rented of the city, by one John Overs, which he enjoyed for many years together, to his great profit; for it is to be imagined, that no small benefit could arise from the ferrying over footmen, horsemen, all manner of cattle, all market folks that came with provisions to the city, strangers, and others. Overs, however, though he kept several servants and apprentices, was of so covetous a soul, that notwithstanding he possessed an estate equal to that of the best Alderman in London, acquired by unceasing labour, frugality, and usury, yet his habit and dwelling were both strongly expressive of the most miserable poverty. He had an only daughter, 'of a beautiful aspect, and a pious disposition, whom he had care to see well and liberally educated, though at the cheapest rate; and yet so, that when she grew ripe and mature for marriage, he would suffer

no man, of what condition or quality soever, by his good will, to have any sight of her, much less access unto her. A young gallant, however, who seems to have thought more of being the waterman's heir than his son-in-law, took the opportunity; whilst he was engaged at the ferry, to be admitted into her company. 'The first interview,' says the story, 'pleased well; the second better; but the third concluded the match between them. In all this interim, the poor silly rich old ferryman, not dreaming of any such passages, but thinking all things to be as secure by land as he knew they were by water,' continued his former wretched and penurious course of life. From the disgusting instances which are given of this caltiff's avarice, he would seem to have been the very prototype and model of Elwes and Dancer; and, as the title page of the book sets forth, even his death was the effect of his covetousness. To save the expense of one day's food in his family, he formed a scheme to feign himself dead for twenty-four hours, in the vain expectation that his servants would, out of propriety, fast until after his funeral. Having procured his daughter to consent to this plan, even against her better nature, he was put into a sheet, and stretched out in his chamber, having one taper burning at his head, and another at his feet, according to the custom of the time. When, however, his servants were informed of his decease, instead of lamenting, they were overjoyed; and, having danced round the body, they brake open the larder, and fell to banqueting. The ferryman bore all this as long; and as much like a dead man, as he was able; 'but, when he could endure it no longer,' says the tract, 'stirring and struggling in his sheet, like a ghost, with a candle in each hand, he purposed to rise up, and rate 'em for their zarciness and boldness; when one of them, thinking that the devil was about to rise in his likeness; being in a great amaze, dashed hold of the but-end of a broken oar, which was in the chamber, and, being a sturdy knave, thinking to kill the devil at the first blow, actually struck out his brains.' It is stated, that the servant was acquitted, and the ferryman made necessary and cause of his own death. The estate of Overs then fell to his daughter, and her lover hearing of it, hastened up from the country; but, in riding post, his horse stumbled, and he brake his neck on the highway. The young heiress was almost distracted at these events, and was recalled to her faculties only by having to provide for her father's interment, for he was not permitted to have Christian burial, being considered as an excommunicated man, on account of his extortions, usury, and truly miserable life. The friars of Bermondsey Abbey were, however, prevailed upon, by money, their abbot being then away, to give a little earth to the remains of the wretched ferryman. But upon the abbot's return, observing a grave which had been but recently covered in, and learning who lay there, he was not only angry with his monks for having done such an injury to the church, for the sake of gain, but he also had the body taken up again, laid on the back of his own ass, and, turning the animal out at the abbey gates, desired of God that he might carry him to some place where he best deserved to be buried. The ass proceeded with a gentle and solemn pace through Kent street, and along the highway, to the small pond once called St. Thomas a Waterings, then the common place of execution, and shook off the ferryman's body directly under the gibbet, where it was put into the ground, without any kind of ceremony. Mary Overs, extremely distressed by such a succession of sorrows, and desirous to be free from the importunity of the numerous suitors for her hand and fortune, resolved to retire into a cloister, which she shortly afterwards did, having first provided for the foundation of that church which still commemorates her name."

A remarkable effigy found in this lane has been supposed to represent the old waterman; but it is, probably (from the style), several centuries later.

The stone bridge begun by Peter, the chaplain of Colechurch,\* in 1176,† was soon such an ornament as the Thames had never before witnessed, and in thirty-three years was completed, by which period "the charitable priest who designed it, the learned architect and wise builder who watched its progress, went the way of all flesh; and in the year 1209 it was finished, by the worthy merchants of London, Serle Mercer, William Almaigne, and Benedict Dotewrite, principal

\* "This first wooden bridge, however, was not fated to stand long; for, on the 16th of November, the feast of St. Edmund, the Archbishop, in the year 1091, 'at the hour of six, a dreadful whirlwind from the south-east, coming from Africa, blew upon the city, and overthrew upwards of six hundred houses, several churches, greatly damaged the tower, and tore away the roof and part of the wall of the church of St. Mary-le-bow, in Cheapside. The roof was carried to a considerable distance, and fell with such force, that several of the rafters, being about twenty-eight feet in length, pierced upwards of twenty feet into the ground, and remained in the same position as when they stood in the chapel.' The best accounts of this terrible event are to be found in the *Chronicle of Florence of Worcester*, p. 457, which was literally copied into the *Annales of Roger de Hoveden*, chaplain to King Henry II., printed in the *Scriptores post Bedam*, in William of Malmesbury, p. 125; and in the *Chronicle of John of Brompton*, p. 987. During the same storm, too, the water in the Thames rushed along with such rapidity, and increased so violently, that London bridge was entirely swept away, whilst the lands on each side were overflowed for a considerable distance. It was rebuilt in wood in the reign of William Rufus, contemporary with the erection of Westminster Hall.

\* "St. Mary Colechurch was an edifice which, until the great fire of London, stood on the north side of the Foultry, at the south end of a turning denominated Conyhoop Lane, from a poulterers shop having the sign of three conies hanging over it. This chapel, of which the skilful Peter was curate, was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and was famous as the place where St. Edmund and St. Thomas a Becket were presented at the baptismal font; still it must have been something very like having a church on the first floor, for Stow says that it was 'built upon a vault above ground, so that men are forced to ascend into it by certain steps.' Of the architectural knowledge of the curate thereof, the citizens of London had experienced some proofs, since he is said to have rebuilt their last wooden bridge; and John Leland the antiquary observes in the notes to his famous *Song of the Swan*, that Radulphus de Diceto, Dean of London, who wrote about 1210, states, from his own knowledge, that he was a native of this city." He was aided by many benefactions.

† "Here therefore, ends the history of the infancy of London Bridge: and a very chargeful infancy it was, for, as old Stow says, 'it was maintained partly by the proper lands, thereof, partly by the liberality of divers persons; and partly by taxations in divers shires, as I have proved; for the space of two hundred and fifteen years.'"

masters of that work. This new bridge consisted, then, of a stone platform, erected somewhat westward of the former, 926 feet long, and 40 in width, standing about 60 feet above the level of the water; and containing a drawbridge, and 19 broad pointed arches, with massive piers, varying from 25 to 34 feet in solidity, raised upon strong elm piles, covered by thick planks, bolted together. Such was the first stone London Bridge, commenced by Peter of Colechurch, A. D. 1176."

In three hundred years very important changes had taken place; for we observe by a picture of the Bridge at that period, that it had assumed an entirely different form, with circular arches, and being nearly covered with houses. Among the most celebrated buildings which stood on the original stone Bridge was a famous chapel, "dedicated to St. Thomas a Becket, the martyr of Canterbury, whence it was familiarly called St. Thomas of the Bridge. This was erected upon the tenth, or great pier, which measured 35 feet in breadth, and 115 from point to point; whilst the edifice itself was 60 feet in length, by 20 feet broad, and stood over the parapet on the eastern side of the bridge, leaving a pathway on the west, about a quarter of the breadth of the pier, in front of the chapel. The face of the building itself was forty feet in height, having a plain gable, surmounted by a cross of about six feet more; whilst four buttresses, crowned by crocketed spires, divided the western end into three parts." It was a richly ornamented and splendid chapel of two stories in height; and it is believed that Peter of Colechurch was buried in it;—the author adds, whimsically enough—"We are assured that he lay there; and as for an epitaph, was not the whole edifice an everlasting catafalco to his memory, which would speak for all times? How finely, indeed, might we apply to him that inscription which the son of Sir Christopher Wren composed for his father's burial-place in St. Paul's—'He lived not for himself, but for the public! Reader, if you seek his monument, look around you!'"

Smith, Horace

The New-York Mirror: a Weekly Gazette of Literature and the Fine Arts (1823-1842); Feb 23, 1828; 5, 33;

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## ROMANCE OF HISTORY.

### ESSEX AND THE MAID OF HONOUR,

OR

### SHAKESPEARE'S INTERVIEW

WITH

Queen Elizabeth.

BY HORACE SMITH, ESQ.

Author of *Dramlety House*, *Reuben Apley*, etc.

THE palace of Nonsuch, near Ewell, in Surrey, was intended by Henry the Eighth, as its proud title sufficiently attests, to afford an unrivalled specimen of his magnificence and taste; but, while he was lavishing his treasures in this most unnecessary addition to his royal residences, Death was sharpening the dart which was to tumble down the ostentatious tyrant, and consign him to his last narrow palace—the tomb.

Nonsuch was left unfinished, an unfulfilled promise of splendour, a gorgeous and yet melancholy evidence of the uncertainty of human grandeur; and Queen Mary, shrinking from the cost of its completion, had it in contemplation to pull it down to save farther charges, when the Earl of Arundel, "for the love and honour he bore to his old master," purchased the place, and finished it according to the original design. Not a vestige of it now remains; it has passed away, with the other elaborate gowgaws of mortal vanity; and the arrogant name which it has left behind it, sounds in our ears like a mournful echo, mocking the presumption of other times. And yet the proud structure was not deficient in solidity as well as statefulness. "It was built round two courts," says the accomplished authoress of *Queen Elizabeth's Memoirs*—"an outer and an inner one, both very spacious; and the entrance to each was by a square gate-house, highly ornamented, embattled, and having turrets at the four corners. These gate-houses were of stone, as was the lower story of the palace itself; but the upper one was of wood, richly adorned, and set forth and garnished with a variety of statues, pictures, and other antic forms of excellent art and workmanship, and of no small cost;" all which ornaments, it seems, were made of rye dough. In modern language, the pictures would probably be called basso-relievos. From the eastern and western angles of the inner court rose two slender turrets, five stories high, with lanterns on the top, which were leaded, and surrounded with wooden balustrades. These towers of observation, from which the two parks attached to the palace, and a wide expanse of champaign country beyond, might be surveyed as on a map, were celebrated as the peculiar boast of Nonsuch.

It was the morning of Michaelmas Eve: the wood-work of the gaudy structure, which was painted and lacquered, glittered in the light of a cloudless sun; the numerous gilt vanes, fashioned in the shapes of the various animals that figured in the armorial bearings of royalty, flashed from the top of every tower and pinnacle; while the royal banners displayed from the summits of the two lofty turrets, and flaunting proudly on the breeze, announced to all the circumjacent country that they floated over Queen Elizabeth and her court, who were then residing in the palace. Although it was thus graced and honoured, the earliness of the hour, and the heat of the morning, had prevented any great appearance of bustle around the exterior of the building. A few halberdiers and yeomen of the guard, in their rich liveries, were lounging in front of the outer gate-house; along the roads that skirted the parks, horses and carriages, betraying their progress by the dust, were seen to converge towards the same point; but in other respects, the landscape was as still as it was lovely. The herds of deer in the park, only distinguishable by their horns, were

crouching in the shade; the cows, that were usually pastured around the gate-house, had not yet returned from the farm, whither they had been driven to be milked; and with the exception of a single stately stag, which emerged from a thicket, as if to reconnoitre, and snuff up the morning air, nothing appeared to move within the wide chase that surrounded the mansion; while the absence of music, or any other sound of state or revelry from the walls, gave reason to conclude that her majesty had not yet arisen from her slumbers.

Upon a terrace, however, which flanked the exterior of the inner court, and communicated by a flight of stone steps with the park, was assembled a little party, who had obeyed the first summons of chancicleer, in the loyal and laudable hope of affording good entertainment to their royal mistress, when it should please her to begin the sports and pastimes of the day. Among these was old Yeovil, one of the huntsmen, a withered and weatherbeaten figure, but with a patch of red upon either cheek-bone, that seemed to attest he might still be in at a good many deaths before his own. He held three leash of greyhounds by leathern thongs, and was surrounded by several couple of staghounds, most of the latter being crouched at his feet, dosing and winking at the sun; while the former, with ears erect, and in various graceful attitudes of alert attention, were imitating their master in watching the movements of a motley group immediately opposite to them. It consisted of Master Toby, so called from his being at the head of the scullery, and who, for once, had constituted himself, moreover, a sort of deputy-master of the revels; and a troop of extempore maskers, collected from among the inferior domestics, who had agreed to get up a little pageant among themselves, stuffed full of fulsome compliments to the queen, and, according to the fashion of the time, most fantastically allegorical. Shakespeare's ridicule, and the burlesque of Bottom and Weaver, had not been yet long enough before the public to banish the rage for such emblematic foolery: nor would it under any circumstances, have been likely to exert a beneficial influence upon Master Toby, who sometimes made furtive excursions from the scullery into the regions of Parnassus, and whose taste had been exclusively derived from the quaint devices of those symbolical banquets he had assisted in cooking; and which, from their hieroglyphical character, had received the appropriate name of Subtleties. At this self-appointed mask-master, who, with a paper in one hand, and a cane in the other, was strutting about, endeavouring to get up a rehearsal as well among the amateur actors, by whom he was surrounded, some of whom were attired as allegorical females, the calm old huntsman gazed with a quiet wonderment, that kept his face fixed in an intermediate expression between a simper and a sneer. And, sooth to say, they must have exhibited a puzzling sort of cross-reading to a straight-forward man like him, who knew all the parties by sight, but neither understood why they were thus strangely metamorphosed, nor comprehended the purport of what they were instructed to utter.

The man who was to misrepresent Diana having thrown up his feet on a bench, in defiance of petticoats and decorum, and all the *bien-sances* that should distinguish the "chaste huntress of the silver bow," swore "by cogs, nouns, and snails," in answer to the summons of Master Toby, that he would not come to book until he had finished his pipe; in confirmation of which averment he spat upon the ground, and recommenced his whiffs with such energy, that the half-moon in his head was only occasionally seen, as it dimly emerged from the cloud of tobacco-smoke in which it was enveloped.

"Come, then, Cupid, we will begin with you I have

you got your speech quite perfect?" said Master Toby to a little boy, who had twisted his wings all away, in the earnestness of a game at marbles with an urchin of his own age.

"Yes, sir, yes!" replied the son of Venus. "Fain dubbs, Jemmy! fain tribbs! Knuckle down, Jemmy! fain going through the ring a second time! Keep your yard's distance, and no cheating!"

"Plutikins! you young scapegrace! call you this saying the speech?" exclaimed Toby, in wrath.—"Spout it, sirrah, spout it, or your shoulders shall be scored with my ratan till they show like ribs of pork."

"Nay, now, forsooth, Master Toby, let us finish the game, there's a good fellow. It's my go next, and there are only three in the ring. And look you, here's lazy Barney Mumpford falling asleep in the sun, for want of something to do. Halloo, Barney! Barney!" continued the stripling, bawling in his ear; "there's Master Toby waiting for you to begin."

The person thus aroused, whose close doublet and hose were thickly painted with tongues to give him the semblance of Report or Fame, now got lazily up, and after some very deliberate stretching and yawning began his speech, which he spouted with a sort of drowsy composure. As it was intended to compliment the queen, not less upon the wide diffusion of her glory than upon her extensive knowledge of languages or tongues, it commenced after the following fashion:

"To the four quarters of the earth I've blown Eliza's name; I need not add my own. Useless to her would such a blazon be, For she who knows all tongues must needs know me!"

"By my fackins, though, Master Toby," cried the spokesman, breaking off in the very exordium of his address, "if her grace should ask my name, after all, I shall e'en tell her that I'm Barney Mumpford—that I have been a groom seven years, and that the post-master of the great stables is vacant; for I may as well have it as another, and a nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse."

With a look of profound alarm, the culinary stage-manager declared that such a departure from histrionic precedent would infallibly bring them all into disgrace, and reminded his pupil that he ought to have announced himself in the first instance by blowing his trumpet.

"Odsó! and so I ought," cried Barney; "and I need not have forgotten it, for I found that part easier to learn by heart than all the rest."

So saying, he put the instrument to his mouth, and summoning all his breath to his aid, gave birth to a discordant bray, which seemed to have had a groan and a roar for its respective parents. At this abortive effort, old Yeovil, who from childhood upwards had been accustomed to wind every instrument of the sort, from a penny trumpet to a French horn, could no longer remain a passive spectator; but seizing the trumpet, and applying it to his mouth, he collected the breath into his hollow leathern cheeks, and blew so loud and lusty a recheat, that the inner court echoed to the sound, the dogs suddenly leaped up, baying and barking, and, at the same moment, a gentleman-usher, issuing from the offices, rebuked them angrily, as a set of unmannerly grooms and brawling nummers, to keep such a coil ere the breakfast-bell had warned in the great court, and when it was even uncertain whether her highness had quitted her bedroom.

"I would give a Harry groat," said Yeovil, "to know whether her grace means to betake herself to the stand in the park to see the coursing, or whether we are to uncouple the hounds, and drive up a fat buck for the cross-bow, for the morning begins to wear, and the dew will be soon off the grass."

"Body o' me!" ejaculated Master Toby, drawing himself up, and looking contemptuously at the huntsman; "think you our noble and learned mistress

recreate herself with brute beasts, when she might listen to the Orphean strains of poetry that I have provided for her in this our most quaint, dainty, and delectable device? Now, good man Report, pursue your speech—pursue your speech—accept, fair, peerless, learned, virgin queen!”

“Gramercy! master Toby,” quoth Report—“four lines at a stretch is honest yeoman’s work—you must get some one else to accept the queen, for it is clean beyond me to go any further.” Not less indignant as a poet than as a loyal subject at this declaration, master Toby was about to pronounce a severe reprimand upon Goodman Report, when he was forestalled by a loud laugh from the Four Quarters of the World, who were standing in the shade playing at chuck-farthing with Saint Michael, which latter personage had been dressed up to do honour to his own approaching eve. Africa and the Saint, after wrangling for some time about a farthing, had betaken themselves, like true Englishmen, to swearing, and then to mutual accusations of profaneness; when the Saint, pointing to his adversary’s visage, which was smeared over with a sooty pigment, to give him the better semblance of a negro, declared that he must needs have been the greatest offender, since he had sworn till he was black in the face. This joke was received with a huge and simultaneous burst of laughter by Europe, Asia, and America, although they were repeatedly called to order, and were threatened with the rattan by the wrathful master Toby. Finding his four refractory quarters to be indifferent to his menaces, the latter now betook himself to father Thames, a venerable looking figure with a crown of bulrushes, a long board of sedge and water-flags, and wearing a loose watchet robe, which having fallen back while he was emptying a pot of ale, disclosed a pair of greasy buckskin hose, with ridling boots and spurs. “Zooks, master Toby, let us finish the tankard—you know the Thames is apt to be dry at this season,” cried the river god, chuckling at his own wit. “Dry, quotha! methinks you’re always dry,” replied Toby—“but heshrew me an I ever knew the Thames to be replenished with humming ale, where’s your urn?” “Here, master Toby, here,” said father Thames, thrusting a large pitcher under his left arm, “and where’s the tinsel stream that is to come pouring out of it?” “I popp’d it inside to keep it dry, for there was an ugly dew this morning, that would presently have washed off all the glitter.”

“By my fackins! that was well cared for: keep your water dry whatever you do: hold your urn more sloping, and though that cannot spout, you may spout away yourself.”

Thus instructed and commended, the river god, lifting up his voice, which was by no means so clear and liquid as the character required, exclaimed,

“On my proud breast those floating castles ride,  
That did subdue the great Armada’s pride;  
Behold, illustrious Queen!”

when his progress was not less suddenly than unpleasantly interrupted by a freak of the mischievous urchin, Cupid, who, having finished his game of marbles, and lighted a piece of paper by the assistance of Diana’s pipe, slyly insinuated it into the river god’s left hand, as it hung dangling beneath his urn. Little expecting to be thus surreptitiously set on fire, father Thames, uttering a cry of surprise and pain, let fall the pitcher, which was smashed into a hundred pieces, and bounded forward a good clothier’s yard at a single leap. No sooner, however, had he discovered the little incendiary, who betrayed himself by a shriek of laughter, than, with fury in his looks, he blustered out an oath, much too combustible for so aqueous a divinity, and commenced an immediate pursuit, for the purpose of inflicting a summary vengeance. In less than a minute the offender had run twice round Africa,

crossed Europe, scudded behind the back of Asia, and swung round the front of America; but Scamander, when he pursued the runaway Achilles, was not more swift or unrelenting than father Thames in his chase of the unlucky Cupid, who having thrown away his wings that he might fly the faster, at length bolted across the terrace through a postern-gate that led into the inner court, his pursuer followed close upon his heels, and both were presently out of sight and hearing. Ere the laughter occasioned by this incident had subsided among the rest of the party to whom the fugitives belonged, their attention was arrested by a company of horsemen riding towards the palace at full speed, and leaving a long cloud of dust behind them. As they galloped past the end of the terrace, in order to wheel round towards the gate-house, it was evident they had travelled far and fast, and through a different tract of country from that which surrounded Nonsuch; for both horses and riders were splashed with mud and mire, over which a white powdery dust had settled, until it had become impossible to distinguish the colour of either steed or garment, although it was sufficiently evident, from their accoutrements, feathers, and bearing, that the leading cavaliers were officers. At the head of the band, mounted on a fleet barb, was a young gallant, who, as far as could be judged from the great rapidity with which he passed, possessed singular beauty of form and feature, and appeared to be a most graceful and accomplished horseman. Four others, although they rode a little way behind him, seemed, by their gestures, to be his friends and companions, and at a distance of ten or twenty yards was the rear of the cavalcade, consisting of grooms and other attendants. Without relaxing his speed until he reached the entrance of the great gate-house, the leader of the troop threw himself hastily from his horse, and hurried into the court with the air of one whose rank and station authorized him to pass, even into the residence of royalty, without let or question; although the yeomen of the guard looked somewhat anxiously at one another, as if they ought to have demanded his purpose before they suffered him to enter. At the portal which formed the entrance to the queen’s dwelling apartments, and through which the stranger would have speeded in the same unceremonious manner as before, the pages, gentlemen ushers, and others, who were clustered about the doors, and who were startled at the appearance of such a soiled and bespattered figure, forcing himself, as it were, into the private chambers, drew up and opposed his progress, inquiring at the same time who he was, and what he wanted? “Gentlemen,” said the stranger, impatiently waving his hand for them to fall back, “my purpose brooks not delay, and I beseech you not to parley with me but to give me free passage. What! am I so changed by a little mud and dirt that ye know me not for the Earl of Essex, master of the horse, and of the ordnance, and the lord deputy?” So saying, and without giving them time to recover from their surprise, he passed through the midst of them, and began to ascend the stairs.

Labouring under heavy imputations for his misconduct in Ireland, from which country he had suddenly returned, not only without leave, but in positive disobedience to the commands of his royal mistress; relying upon her well-known affection for his pardon, and complete restoration to favour, if he could once gain access to her, and apprehensive that, if he failed in this object his enemies would ensue his disgrace and ruin, the impetuous earl had ridden post both day and night, without communicating his purpose to a single individual, except a few of his particular adherents, and having thus far successfully triumphed over all obstacles, he was not likely to be impeded by the pages and chamberlains whom he encountered in the private apartments, as he hurried through them.

Gazing in utter amazement at such a bespattered figure, making the floors ring to his heavy riding-boots as he stalked onwards towards the queen’s bedroom, some stood aloof, concluding that he had explained his errand to the yeomen below; while others placed themselves in his way, and informed him that the queen had not yet come forth; but he either passed them, or put them aside, with the air of one who would not be disobeyed, and thus traversed the presence-chamber, and the waiting-room of the maids of honour, several of whom were not a little alarmed at the sight of such an inexplicable apparition. Neither noticing their startled looks, nor heeding their eager whispers, the adventurous earl pursued his way, and never stopped till he came to the queen’s bedroom, the door of which he undauntedly opened, walked in, and closed it behind him.

Elizabeth was newly risen, and her locks were hanging in disorder about her face. She was incapable of fear, but her surprise was not without agitation at the first sight of a heated and bemoiled stranger thus intruding into her bedroom, and she was on the point of calling out for her chamberlain, when Essex rushed forward, threw himself upon his knees, and humbly implored her pardon. The sound of his well-known voice, the humility of his language, and, above all, the sight of one whom she still loved, kneeling at her feet, and looking up to her with flushed and imploring features, so won upon her unprepared heart, that she held out both her hands for him to kiss, listened with a kind aspect to all his excuses, and gave him a more cordial reception than even his fondest hopes had ventured to anticipate. Weak as a woman, although great and illustrious as a sovereign, she now suffered the former character to predominate, and Essex, who, with all his headstrong impetuosity, was not deficient in the courtier’s art, took good advantage of the mood in which he found her. Attributing his unsanctioned return to the impossibility of existing any longer out of the presence of a divinity, whose sight was as vital to him as was the breath of heaven to his nostrils, he addressed her in terms of passionate, and even romantic gallantry, talked of her excellent beauties, compared her at once to Venus and Minerva, to a nymph, goddess, and angel; quoted Latin and Greek in confirmation of his assertions, and played his part so successfully, that leaving her after a conference of some duration, he appeared in high spirits, and thanked heaven that though he had suffered many storms abroad, he had found a sweet calm at home.

Having taken some refreshment, and attired himself in his most splendid suit, as some atonement for the unseemly habiliments in which he had before presented himself, Essex, who had been invited to repeat his visit to the palace, was sallying forth for that purpose, when he was accosted by a personage, who respectfully vailing his beaver, and presenting a letter, would have explained its object, had he not been anticipated by the earl’s exclaiming—“Ha, Will Shakspeare! what makest thou at Nonsuch, when thou shouldst be playing the ghost to the holiday folks in London, and casing them of their Michaelmas testers!”

The poet replied, that he had come to Ewell with his friend Dick Burbage, to solicit of the queen a license for their theatre, and that his gracious patron, the Earl of Southampton, who was now unfortunately under her majesty’s heavy displeasure, had condescended to give him a letter to his special good friend the Lord Essex, bespeaking his influence and kind offices as soon as he should return from Ireland. Of this happy event the bard declared that he had entertained no immediate expectation; but having learnt, within the last half-hour, that his lordship had actually arrived at Nonsuch, he had been emboldened to deliver the letter with which he had been thus honoured. “Gramercy! master Shakspeare!” cried



the earl after hastily glancing over the paper, "I am myself but a newly pardoned criminal, and therefore little warranted to become a suitor; but I feel too happy in her grace's favour not to wish to extend it to others. There are few things in which I would not venture to please the Lord Southampton: and it would like me no less to serve the merry varlet, or the soul-stirring bard, (which shall I call thee?) whose lofty lines ever seem to me to o'erstep all praise, until they are clean eclipsed by his quaint and comical fantasies. So forward! with me to the garden, and if I may speed your suit, it shall not lack a willing advocate."

The poet bowed his thanks, and followed at a short distance behind the earl, who, however, turned round and conversed familiarly with him till they entered the gardens, which, according to the prevailing taste, were laid out in trim beds, formal parterres, fountains, and successive terraces, communicating with one another by flights of stone steps, and ornamented with vases, statues, and groups of sculpture. At the extremity of one of these terraces stood a little pavilion called the Paradise, being decorated with representations of Adam and Eve, the serpent, and the tree of knowledge; and having an arbour for its entrance engrafted with clustering altheas, jessamines, honeysuckles, roses, pomegranates, and other flowering shrubs, all of which were in full bloom and fragrance. Within this odorous and shady bower, the queen, who had been observed to bestow an unusual attention that morning upon her toilet, was seated, holding a large feather fan, and surrounded by several maids of honour, all standing. Behind them, within the pavilion, were seen other female attendants employed in caul-work: lutes and cithras, with cards, and a richly enamelled chess-board, were lying upon a marble table by their side. Upon approaching the august figure of royalty thus picturesquely enthroned, the earl fell upon his knees—an act of homage which her majesty always exacted, even from her ministers in their audiences of business; and Shakspeare, halting at some little distance, immediately imitated his example. Essex found a no less gracious reception than he had experienced in the morning, for the remembrance of his flattery had not yet passed away, and their conference had lasted for some time, when the queen, looking towards Shakspeare, inquired whether his squire, who seemed but young in years, had left his locks in the hands of the Irish rebels, that he wore so bald a brow.—"I much fear me that I am presumptuous and overbold," said the earl, after having mentioned the name and object of his attendant. "I who am myself but a petitioner for mercy and forgiveness, in thus becoming a suitor for others: but since your majesty's condescension has so soon forgotten my offences, I may perhaps stand better excused now than at another time, for forgetting myself."

"So, this is the dramatic chronicler," said the queen, who had felt much interest in his historical plays; "let him approach; we would have speech of him; and you, my lord, may avail yourself of yonder seat, for after so long and so speedy a journey, you may well need a little rest."

Bowing as he accepted the permission thus given to him, Essex beckoned to the poet, who approached, and concluding that he had been invited to imitate his patron, seated himself upon a low garden stool, beside the earl, and immediately opposite to the queen. So unusually gracious was the present mood of Elizabeth, that she smiled at a mistake, which at another moment might have excited her indignation, and waved her hand to her attendants as a signal that they might retire into the pavilion; a notice which they instantly obeyed. Essex, catching the expression of the queen's face with the alacrity of a courtier,

smiled also; while Shakspeare, perfectly unconscious that he had committed any violation of court etiquette, read his petition with a respectful propriety that might well atone for his little oversight.

"Look you, Master Playwright," graciously exclaimed her majesty when he had concluded; "your writings like us well, but touching this license for playing more frequently, here is our head Bearward, who has been lately complaining to us most piteously that you have become his worst enemy; for that when the flag is flying at your theatre of the Globe, his garden is so deserted by the people, that his best bear will scarcely pay the baiting. How say you to this?"

"I dare not misprize his calling, since it has even found a gracious patron in your majesty," replied the bard; "but, under favour, I would venture to affirm, that he who withdraws his fellow subjects from such pastimes, and instructs them in their country's annals, and points out to their admiration the glory of their monarchs, (than whom none have been more illustrious than your majesty's immediate ancestors,) can hardly fail to civilize and exalt the people, though he may find it impossible to add to the renown of the sovereign."

"It is well, and wisely, and loyally urged," said the queen, evidently pleased with the speech; "and, by my troth! it may chance to speed the license for which you are our petitioner. And what led you to our musty chronicles, Sir Poet, when your playwright's art might have found better range in the wider walks of fancy and invention?"

"My grandfather fought with good approval in the battle of Bosworth Field," said Shakspeare, not sorry to have an excuse for mentioning the circumstance, "and was fortunate enough to find favour with your grace's ancestor, the valiant king Henry the seventh. From him and from my father I have inherited a love of loyalty and of my country's glory; and as I despaired of doing justice to such splendid deeds as the defeat of the Armada, and the other exploits that have glorified your grace's reign, I was driven to record the annals of your less illustrious predecessors."

"Beshrew me," said the queen, in an under voice to Essex, "if I have ever heard a varlet speak more honourably, or pithily to the purpose. And yet," she continued, again addressing herself to Shakspeare, "if we forget us not, thou hast somewhere ventured an allusion to our royal self. The passage stays not with us, but we have forgiven it, though it coupled our name, if we mistake not, with some idle flower."

Elizabeth perfectly remembered the lines, though she would not appear to attach so much importance to them, as to have thought them worthy her recollection. Essex, however, who saw the real motives of her reserve, and knew that she would be pleased with the quotation, exclaimed, "Your majesty may pardon both the poet and myself, when we do but recall a Midsummer Night's Dream;" and then looking passionately at the queen, he continued:

"That very time I saw (but thou couldst not)  
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,  
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took  
At a fair vestal throned by the West,  
And loos'd his love-shaft smarly from his bow,  
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;  
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon;  
And the imperial votaress passed on  
In maiden meditation, fancy free.  
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:  
It fell upon a little western flower,  
Before milk-white; now purpl'd with love's wound,  
And maidens call it, 'Love in Idleness.'"

"It ran even thus; but I took you not, my lord, for so shrewd a remembrancer," said the queen.

"The lines might easily have passed from out my head," replied the earl; "but they related to my admired sovereign, and therefore were they treasured

in my heart of hearts." He laid his hand upon his breast as he spoke. Elizabeth looked pleased, though she noticed not the speech, but turning to Shakspeare, resumed, "We have already passed our pardon for this liberty of your pen, wherefore we rebuke it not; and touching the license that you seek, it shall be even as you wish, and our secretary shall have order to prepare the patent."

"I shall be ever bound to pray for your gracious majesty," said the poet, bowing profoundly. "God's pity!—Sir, they tell me that you playwrights be but scant sayers of your prayers, and since they are henceforward to be put up for our own well and welfare, you shall neither lack the means to proffer them, nor a memorial of her for whom you pray." So saying, Elizabeth took a volume from a low table that stood beside her chair, and graciously extended it to Shakspeare, with these words:—"The queen presents you her prayer-book: you may retire." Judging, from the latter command, that he was not expected to express his gratitude, the poet kissed the volume with great reverence, pressed it to his heart, and retired from the royal presence with repeated obeisances, not less delighted at the success of his suit, than flattered by so signal a testimony of her majesty's favour and condescension.

After a prolonged conference, in which he had every reason to believe that he had completely reinstated himself in the queen's favour, Essex also withdrew, descending the terraces, and crossing towards a postern-gate of the park. In this route he most unfortunately encountered the fair Mrs. Bridges, one of the maids of honour, with whom he had long been suspected of being deeply in love, and who, on his account, had already been exposed to the wrath, and even the blows of her royal mistress. Imagining himself to be screened from observation, the enamoured earl accosted her in such terms of fervent and high-flown gallantry as were then in vogue among the courtiers, and placing a small collar of crystals around her neck, which he declared that he had brought from Ireland expressly for her wearing, he would have detained her still longer in dalliance, had not his innamorata hurried away, urging the necessity of resuming her attendance upon the queen. Although her majesty had been so embowered in the arbour as not to be visible to Essex, she had unluckily been following him with her eyes, through a treacherous loop-hole of the leaves, and with a rage-envenomed heart had witnessed the whole transaction.

It was not without a considerable struggle that she could prevent an immediate explosion of her fury, and assume a forced composure of look and voice, as she exclaimed to the approaching offender, "So, mistress! you can find time to wait upon us when you have finished your amorous foolery with the lord deputy. If there be neither treason nor immodesty in the avowal, we would fain know what passages passed between you."

"So, please your majesty," faltered the confused and blushing maid of honour, "we did but exchange a friendly greeting; I tore myself away so soon as civility might warrant, and hastened"—

"Ay, with such haste," interposed the queen, "that you have left your partlet all awry."

"Nothing would dissuade his lordship," resumed Mistress Bridges, blushing still deeper, as she adjusted her ruff, "but he must needs place this Irish carcanet around my neck."

At this confession Elizabeth could restrain herself no longer. Quick as lightning she bestowed upon her trembling rival a violent box on the ear, tore the collar from her neck, dashed it to the ground, and exclaimed, with a look and voice, that sufficiently declared her to be the daughter of Henry the eighth:

"God's death! thou hussy—thou wanton!—thou gill-dirt! thou flaunting young cockatrice! is our

court and presence to be contaminated and insulted by such doings as these? Begone! and let me never again see thy shameless face! What! did I send this traitorous and temerarious youth to Ireland to collect carcanets for his concubines, instead of putting chains around the rebel Tyrone? By the throne of heaven! he shall dearly rue it. I am no queen, to be thus saucily entreated."

The terrified maid of honour shrunk away to conceal her disgrace. Elizabeth arose, and walked hastily towards the mansion; but having had a few minutes to collect herself, and feeling probably that she had betrayed rather more violence than became her sex and station, she turned towards her attendants, and in a tone of assumed moderation, exclaimed, "For ourself, ladies, this matter touches us not; the disloyal minion and the frontless minx would have been forgotten in silent scorn, but that we will neither suffer our public service to be neglected, nor the decency of our court to be violated."

"For the latter, let the name of this flirting puppet be scratched from the list of our maids; and touching this misproved and disobedient lord deputy, who has dared to desert his post, and return from Ireland in open defiance of our orders, we will see that he be straightway humbled. Where is our secretary?—let him join us forthwith in the council-room."

That same evening the earl was committed a prisoner to his chamber; and after much delay and numerous vacillations, occasioned by the miserable perplexity of the queen's mind, as she fluctuated between severity and returning tenderness, she at length publicly disgraced him, and deprived him of all his great offices and emoluments. Always haughty and ungovernable, and rendered alike desperate in fortune and in mind by these indignities, the ill-fated earl was driven to those frantic and well-known projects of rebellion, which shortly afterwards conducted him to the scaffold.



# ORIGIN OF SIGNS OF INNS, &C.: THE GOOD WOMAN. THE GATE. PORTER

*The Atheneum; or, Spirit of the English Magazines (1817-1833); Dec 1, 1819; 6, 5;*

American Periodicals

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## ORIGIN OF SIGNS OF INNS, &c.

From the Gentleman's Magazine.

### THE GOOD WOMAN.

**B**RADY, in his "Clavis Calendaria," says, "the sign yet preserved, particularly by the oil shops, of the *good woman*, although originally meant as expressive of some female Saint, *holy or good woman* who had met death by the privation of her head, has been convert-

ed into a joke against the females, whose alleged loquacity is considered to be satirised by the representation: which to conform to such meaning, they now more commonly call '*The Silent Woman*'."

The following quotations are taken from the writing-desk of an old bache-

lor, who, though he may suffer his pen  
to transcribe such railing\*, yet in his  
heart sincerely loves dear woman.

There's no motion

That tends to vice in man, but I affirm,  
It is the woman's part.

*Shakspeare's Cymbeline.*

She is a woman, and the ways unto her  
Are like the finding of a certain path  
After a deep-fall'n snow—

—O, my conscience,

The world's end and the goodness of a woman  
Will come together.

*Beaumont and Fletcher's Woman's Prize.*

Or I'm a very dunce or womankind

Is a most unintelligible thing :

I can no sense nor no contexture find

Nor their loose parts to method bring ;

I know not what the learn'd may see,

But they're strange Hebrew things to me.

*Cowley's Mistress.*

He who to worth in woman overtrusting  
Lets her will rule, restraint she will not brook :  
And lest to herself, if evil thence ensue,  
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.

*Milton's Paradise Lost.*

Woman, the fountain of all human frailty ;  
What mighty ills have not been done by woman ?  
Who was't betray'd the capitol ? a woman.  
Who lost Mark Antony the world ? a woman.  
Who was the cause of a long ten years war,  
And laid at last old Troy in ashes ? woman !

Woman to man first as a blessing given  
When innocence and love were in their prime ;  
Happy a while in Paradise they lay,  
But quickly woman long'd to go astray :  
Some foolish new adventure needs must prove,  
And the first devil she saw, she chang'd her love ;  
To his temptations, lewdly she inclin'd  
Her soul, and for an apple damn'd mankind.

*Otway's Orphan.*

For 'tis in vain to think to guess,  
At women by appearances ;  
That paint and patch their imperfections  
Of intellectual complexions,  
And daub their tempers o'er with washes  
As artificial as their faces ;  
Wear under visor masks their talents  
And mother wits before their gallants,  
Until they're hamper'd in the noose,  
Too fast to dream of breaking loose,  
Then all the flaws she strove to hide,  
Are made unready with the bride,  
That with her wedding clothes undresses  
Her complaisance and gentilleses.

*Butler's Hudibras.*

A set of phrases learnt by rote,  
A passion for a scarlet coat ;  
When at a play to laugh or cry,  
Yet cannot tell the reason why ;  
Never to hold her tongue a minute,  
While all she prates has nothing in it.  
Whole hours can with a cockcomb sit,  
And take his nonsense ail for wit.—

For conversation well endued,  
She calls it witty to be rude,

And placing railery in railing—  
Will tell aloud your greatest failing—  
In party furious to her power,  
A bitter Whig, or Tory sour ;  
Her arguments directly tend,  
Against the side she would defend.—

If chance a mouse creep in her sight,  
Can finely counterfeit a fright :  
So sweetly screams if it come near her,  
She ravishes all hearts to hear her.—

If Molly happens to be careless,  
And but neglects to warm her hair-lace,  
She gets a cold as sure as death,  
And vows she scarce can fetch her breath !  
Admires how modest woman can,  
Be so *robustious* like a man.

Detached parts of Swift's ' Furniture of  
a Woman's mind ; ' and for similar pas-  
sages, see his Poetical works *passim*,

In men we various ruling passions find ;  
In women, two almost divide the kind ;  
Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,  
The Love of Pleasure, and the love of sway.

Pleasures the sex, as children birds pursue,  
Still out of reach, yet never out of view,  
Sure if they catch to spoil the toy at most,  
To covet flying, and regret when lost ;  
At last, to fancies Youth could scarce descend,  
It grows their Age's prudence to pretend :  
Asham'd to own they gave delight before,  
Redue'd to feign it, when they give no more :  
As Hags hold Sabbaths less for joy than spite,  
So these their merry miserable night ;  
Still round and round the *ghosts* of beauty glide,  
And haunt the places where their honour died.

See how the world its veterans rewards !  
A youth of frolicks, an old age of cards ;  
Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,  
Young without lovers, old without a friend :  
A fop their passion, but their prize a sot ;  
Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot.

*Pope's Moral Essay.*

The fair, 'tis true, by Genius should be won,  
As flowers unfold their beauties to the sun ;  
And yet in females' scales a Fop outweighs,  
And Wit must wear the willow with the bays.

*Young's Satires.*

Bishop Warburton used to say (and  
has expressed nearly the same sentiment  
in his commentary on Pope) " that  
two of the rarest things in the world to  
meet with, were a disinterested man,  
and a woman that had common sense ;"  
and in a note on Milton's  
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,  
he observes that,

The vine is here called *gadding* because being  
married to the elm, like other wives, she is fond of  
gadding abroad and seeking a new associate.

Women are only children of a larger growth ; they  
have an entertaining tattle and sometimes wit ; but  
for solid, reasoning, good sense, I never in my life  
knew one that had it, or who reasoned or acted con-  
sequentially for four and twenty hours together.

*Lord Chesterfield's Letters.*

\* We regret that our Correspondent has confined  
his quotations to the dark side of the question. ED.

It is certain, whatever be the cause, that female goodness seldom keeps its ground, against laughter, flattery, or fashion.  
*Johnson's Rambler.*

Three things a wise man will not trust,  
The wind, the sunshine of an April day,  
And woman's plighted faith I have beheld  
The weathercock upon the steeple's point  
Steady from morn to eve, and I have seen  
The bees go out upon a sunny morn  
See ere the sunshine would not end in showers,  
But when was woman true? *Southey's Madoc.*

And shall we own such judgment? No—As soon  
Suck rosts in December, ice in June;  
Hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff,  
Believe a woman, or an epitaph.  
*Lord Byron's English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.*

And do I then wonder that Julia deceives me,  
When surely there's nothing in nature more common?  
She vows to be true, and while vowing she leaves me,  
But could I expect any more from a woman?  
Oh, woman! your heart is a pitiful treasure;  
And Mahomet's doctrine was not too severe,  
When he thought you were only materials of pleasure,  
And reason and thinking were out of your sphere,  
By your heart, when the fond sighing lover can win it,  
He thinks that an age of anxiety's paid;  
But oh! while he's blest, let him die in the minute—  
If he live but a day, he'll be surely betray'd.  
*Moore's Poems by Thomas Little.*

## THE GATE.

I never saw the picture of a gate  
upon a board over an ale-house;—  
but a little gate itself is a common sign  
at small public houses by the road side,  
and on it is generally written,

This gate hangs well, and hinders none,  
Refresh and pay; and travel on.

I have been told of another inscription:

Who buys good land, buys many stones.  
Who buys good meat, buys many bones.  
Who buys good eggs, buys many shells.  
Who buys good ale, buys nothing else.

The first English drinking ballad extant is quoted at length in Warton's History of English Poetry, from "Gammer Gurton's Needle," 1551, the first regular comedy in our language.

In Ritson's Collection of English Songs, is one by Beaumont, entitled "The Ex-ale-tation of Ale," which consists of no less than 70 verses.

O ale, *ab alendo*, the liquor of life!

That I had a mouth as big as a whale!  
For mine is but little, to touch the least tittle

That belongs to the praise of a pot of good ale, &c.

Pope, in imitation of Denham's well known lines on the Thames, thus wantonly satirizes a very worthy man.

Flow, Welsted, flow, like thine inspirer, *beer*;  
Tho' stale, not ripe; tho' thin, yet never clear;  
So sweetly mawkish, and so smoothly dull,  
Heady, not strong; o'erflowing, yet not full.

A brewer being drowned in his own vat, Jekyll said, that the verdict of the Coroner's jury should be, "found floating on his *watery bier*."

Voltaire compared the British nation to a barrel of their own ale; the top of which is froth, the bottom dregs, the middle excellent.

## PORTER

is said to have been first made by Ralph Harwood, Shoreditch; thus Gutteridge, a native of that parish, says,

Harwood, my townsman, he invented first  
Porter to rival wine, and quench the thirst,  
Porter, which spreads its fame half the world o'er.  
Whose reputation rises more and more.  
As long as porter shall preserve its fame,  
Let all with gratitude our parish name.

*From the United Service Journal.*

## THE SIEGE OF SAWSTON:

A HISTORICAL TRADITION.

"ESCAPE indeed, you old scoundrel! Faith no! she's fairly caged, and I'd as soon stop a breach with my unmailed body, as risk a doit on the chance of her popish graceship's *escape*! Hark'e, master Matthew, hear you not the brave boys? within a stone's throw are they of Sawston, and a rattling game they'll play up with the old hall, I reckon, afore they've done. Ho! yeho! and hurrah for the Protestant lads! the Cambridge boys for ever!" and so saying, *Robbie the Reckless*, as young Robert Ravenshaw was commonly called, threw aloft his feathered cap, and gave a cheer which rung through the spacious and antique baronial hall of Sawston manor-house. "Silence, *you*," quoth Matthew Baldwin, one of the staunch retainers of Sir John Huddleston, the Roman Catholic proprietor of Sawston, "never could a mole hear aught, with your accursed clapper going." Ravenshaw shouted again, and several of the men who pillowed their heads upon timber in that hall, aroused by the noise, startled up, and asked its meaning. "Lie down, you knaves," grumbled the porter, "'tis thundering, and that drunken gallows-bird would fain make me believe—" "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!" roared Robbie, and at that instant a tremendous thumping upon the principal portal of the edifice tended to confirm his tidings. The tenants of the hall, put instantly in motion, scrambled, in the dull light of dying wood-embers and faintly gleaming dawn, to regain those arms of which inebriety and slumber had deprived them; still were they giddy, and scarcely conscious of existence from the effects of their revelry some few hours previous; a riotous revelry, which had nearly unroofed Sawston Hall, wherein the Princess Mary fleeing from the persecution of the great leaders of the Protestant party, had deigned this night to ensconce her royal person. The knocking being repeated upon the great door which opened into the baronial hall, Matthew Baldwin seized a tilting-spear, Robbie the Reckless dragged him towards the portal, and in the rear mustered strong those valiant vassals who had slumbered when they should have *watched*. Ere Baldwin could cry "Who knocks?" he was anticipated by Sir John Huddleston from the casement of an upper story. "Dorothy Dare, the market-woman," was the reply; "let me in, for the love of Mary! the ghost of the Black Wizard has troubled me again!" "Hish!" quoth Matthew to his compeers, "lay that fool in the horse-pond, and I'll warrant her goblin won't trouble her again in a hurry." "Knaves! knaves!" cried Sir John, angrily, "let the woman in! what varlets! is she to break the slumbers of our royal guest, because forsooth,"—but here the door opened, and as Dorothy Dare rushed in, Ravenshaw darted out, whilst Sir John closed the casement. "Woman!" commenced Matthew, "thy farrago—" "Take, take me to your master!" screamed Dorothy; "they'll murder the Princess! five thousand Cambridge lads at least,"—"Hah!" quoth the porter, "say you so? come on then, mistress, I'm your man!"

and he hauled the terrified but intrepid country-woman by main strength from the hall.

Presently the uproar of an enraged multitude was heard round the antique abode of the Huddlestons: violent threats, blasphemous imprecations, shouts of frantic wrath, and hisses of overweening contempt, proceeded from the furious insurgents, whose determination to rase Sawston Hall to its foundations was not concealed, that is, in case the royal fugitive was not instantly delivered into their hands. The Hall was pleasantly situated in the midst of a large garden, nearly round which had been thrown up a vallum sustaining a high parapetted wall, which of course overlooked a fosse tolerably broad, deep, and full of stagnant water. This fortification was carried round the garden until met by a shallow river at each end, which completed the defensive boundary of that pleasure-ground. The river flowed at the back of the house, and beyond it, for some miles, was spread the dreary, uncultivated, champaign country of Cambridgeshire, mostly unclaimed either for pasture or arable land, and in consequence tolerably free from those usual partitioners of property, hedges, palings, or loose stone walls. Such a country afforded, it is evident, every facility for escape from Sawston manor-house, provided the attack upon it commenced solely in front, and that its inmates had been indulged with timely notice of the position and intentions of a besieging party; the river would have required considerable fortification, in case of actual assault, (a contingency little dreamt of on the night in question) since it was easily forded. The proprietor of Sawston Hall might, perhaps, had he always ostensibly guarded his demesne, have drawn down upon himself the rancour of the Protestant party, between whom and the Papists the most deadly feuds subsisted, and almost daily the most fatal skirmishes took place: but the rich Catholic nobility and gentry of England surrounded themselves with retainers, who formed, though not avowedly, bodies of well-disciplined military, ready to rise in mighty union on the slightest pretence for so doing. Their pay was equal to that of privates in the regular army, their comforts of course greater, and but for their unavoidable dispersion in small detachments over the country, and their probable inferiority in number, the Catholics had little reason to dread the event of even a civil Holy War. By such household soldiery was Sawston Hall now garrisoned and the Princess Mary defended, who as a Catholic fugitive had few attendants, and was obliged to conceal rather than to display her royal rights and immunities. The assailants of Sawston, though numerous, were generally speaking of the lowest grade, a veritable mob, and but little improved in spirit and appearance by the intermixture of several University boys (all under seventeen years of age) who had joined them merely from a characteristic love of mischief, thinking any thing in the shape of an affray, "prime fun," and who were now shouting at the highest treble of their voices, "King Edward for ever!" "Confound the Catholics!" "Down with the Papists!" &c. &c. &c. The uproar heard from within Sawston Hall was truly hideous, and the assault was now actively commenced

without; the assailants rushed headlong into the moat, wherein some miserably perished; some, more fortunate, scrambled through, gained the mound, and in spite of the precarious footing it afforded, began tearing and battering down the massy stone wall with such implements as they possessed; others of the multitude thronged, and beat furiously upon the great nail-studded, and iron-ribbed gate which opened into the grounds; but at a signal from their leader they retreated to some distance, and presently a tremendous explosion, and the fall of huge fragments of the strong portal, announced to the inmates of the mansion the success of a petard, which could only have been affixed and fired by a military hand. "Byr Lady!" quoth Matthew Baldwin, at this terrible *avant courier* of serious war, "but we shall have sharp work of it! Bestir yourselves, my lads, and lock up the women, poor things! then each to his post, and let him maintain it like a soldier."—"Good Lord, help us!" cried another man, "and there's scarce enough ammunition in the house to treat the rascals to a couple of volleys! Fools as we are to have suffered this surprise!" Now, from all quarters rushed in, like a roaring and resistless torrent, the furious multitude, who presently surrounding the venerable mansion, cut off all the hope of escape to the females within it; and therefore, such as had been too timid to attempt a flight across the country on the first alarm, ere the walls had been breached, the gate blown up, and the cincturing garden-ground thronged with a dense and raging populace, remained, agonized with terror, in the mansion, concealed and fastened up, singly or in company.

Robbie the Reckless was conspicuous as the leader of the insurgents; his tall, spare form, his gaunt-dread-nought features, and his wildly uncouth attire, gleamed now here, now there, amidst the host, rapid as lightning, and as ominous of evil. Ravenshaw had "seen better days," but long since had they vanished, and at his own bidding too. He was the youngest son of respectable, but far from wealthy Catholic parents, and by them had been intended, with a provisional view, for the cloister; but his high and restless spirit revolted at the idea of an obligation to take monastic vows; little consonant in truth with his ardent temperament, and finding that, by a change of faith alone he could excuse himself from entering upon a line of life of which the very idea was abhorrent, he declared himself a Protestant, and went into the army. His conduct therein was neither conformable with the character of a gentleman, nor to that discipline which is essential to the maintenance of orderly conduct in armed bodies: public and irreparable disgrace consequently overtook him; his family, justly offended by his apostasy and immoralities, refused to assist, nay, even to see him, and the wretched young man, recklessly bold from contempt, and weariness of existence, obtained a precarious subsistence from the menial members of great families, by occasionally bullying the weak, battling the strong, and acting as the ready spy or convenient friend of either religious party, as interest prompted his exertions. The fomentor of feuds, the malicious tale-bearer, the savage

champion of which side soever it suited him to espouse, he was by each alternately dreaded, feared, hated, courted, caressed, and remunerated. Aware of the intended visit of the Princess Mary to Sawston, he it was who had incited the Cambridge mob to their present attack upon the Hall: he it was who, having completed his arrangements with them, contrived to assist in the hearty welcome given by Sir John Huddleston to the royal fugitive, by feasting with the vassals of that hospitable knight; and he it was who, as we have seen, rushed forth to head the body of insurgents, to whom he had pledged his assistance as their captain. Such was Robert Ravenshaw!

The clamour of the assailants for the appearance of Sir John Huddleston and the Princess, became more and more terrific, and was answered by the muskets and blunderbusses, &c. of the armed retainers, fired upon the crowd from the several windows of the mansion. Many persons were seriously wounded thereby, and yells of anguish and desperation only preceded Ravenshaw's signal for a general assault. Those of the besiegers who possessed fire-arms, returned with them the compliment of the besieged; a storm of missiles smashed every pane of glass in the casements of Sawston Hall; and pikes, staves, and bludgeons, thrust into the faces and eyes of the men who warred from the lower windows, obliged them again and again to retreat, as again and again they returned to the charge. Nevertheless, the assailed, thirsting for Protestant blood, could do little more than act upon the defensive, and urged to fury, as they were, by the suddenness of the attack, had only most bitterly to regret their improvidence in being so ill prepared to sustain it; their ammunition was indeed low, and at the early hour in which they had been surprised, the household fires were extinguished, so that they had small hope of being able to cast, in any serviceable time, fresh shot and bullets, and truly the little lead they were enabled to collect for such a purpose was wrenched from the demolished casements, and other household fixtures. The lack of powder was irremediable, and the carbine of Master Matthew was in the act of being primed from the last flask, when on the postern fell a myriad of such blows, as a door of iron should scarcely have resisted; it yielded, with a crash that smote the very hearts of the assaulted, and a thundering cheer of triumph announced the irruption of "the Cambridge lads" into the venerable manor-house of Sawston! The foremost man as he crossed the threshold, was felled to the ground by a battle-axe, and immediately trampled upon almost to fragments by the rushing multitude who struggled tumultuously forward in one dense and appalling mass, obstinately fighting their way through the narrow and well-contested passage, that led from the postern through a miniature court-yard to the baronial hall. A frightful scene of horror and carnage ensued; both parties fought in the most savage and desperate manner; but the resistless tide of besiegers, reckless of all obstacles, bore down their adversaries, as they pressed forward, who, obliged involuntarily to retreat, wielded not their weapons idly, and found the butt ends of

their fire arms serviceable, when the muzzles had ceased to be so. The multitude, through a way, every inch of which was disputed, succeeded at length in gaining the baronial hall, wherein was stationed the principal body of men at arms; and then, with indescribable violence raged a conflict, of which the victory was at length decided by numbers, and the triumphant Protestant bands rushed with hideous outcries up the grand stair-case, not however unopposed, and valiantly too. Blood tracked their progress, and numbers and numbers continuing to pour in, the foremost gained the long gallery, situated in which were the best dormitories; a slight inspection of these soon sufficed to determine which it was that had been appropriated to the Princess, but not in any of the numerous apartments, now visited by the hostile intruders, was the royal Mary or her host visible. The assailants seemed disappointed, and one of them mentioned the chapel; "Lead, lead to it then; but where's Robbie?" The young collegian answered by darting forward, bursting open a narrow door, and rushing up a still narrower stair-case; the multitude followed, and shortly found themselves on the bare rafters of a false roof, whose covering beams were nearly as bare, being but imperfectly tiled, and scarcely plastered. Here all was dark, although day had now fully beamed, except that the rays which twinkled through many chinks might possibly have been accepted as an apology for light; but the door of the chapel being forced open, sufficient day was admitted to secure the intruders from contusions incident upon stumblings over the acute-angled beams upon which they trod. This chapel was a mere chamber, *secretly* serving for so holy a purpose; but the state of religious feeling since the Reformation had been such, as to authorize the proprietors of Sawston Hall in establishing this provision for the maintenance, at least in private, of their ancestral faith; glad indeed were the insurgents therefore, when they had discovered what they termed "the den of Popish idolatry;" and like locusts, not a thing did they touch but to destroy. Benches, rituals, pictures, emblems, crucifixes, holy vestments, consecrated wafer, altar plate, and altar, &c. &c. were utterly demolished, and singular as it may appear, yet in strict accordance with the spirit that actuated these orthodox churchmen in their outrages, no attempt was made to pillage the least particle of the ruined property, although its destroyers were for the most part, the very poor and wretched of mankind. *Religion* authorized them to destroy *idolatry*, but it also forbade them to steal, and thus was effected a curious compromise between passion and principle, on the part of men who better knew the name than the nature of Christianity. Some persons, however, will probably feel persuaded, that the love of fighting, the mere glory of engaging in a desperate affray, actuated British spirit upon this occasion, and similar ones of daily occurrence, far more than religious motives: against this supposition we have nothing to urge, considering the gross ignorance of the age, and (if we except the Cambridge students) the rank in life of these zealots.

During the havoc in the chapel-chamber,

wild work was carried on in various parts of the house. A vast castellated mansion, capable of affording accommodation to at least two hundred inhabitants, and pretty well garisoned and stored for a private fortalice at all times, was not, it will be supposed, to be stormed and taken without considerable resistance; and though the numbers of the Protestant party gave them a decided advantage over their better armed and regularly trained opponents, yet the most determined stand was made against their progress in every quarter whereinto they endeavoured to penetrate. The party in the chapel had scarcely accomplished the demolition of its sacred appurtenances, when their ears were assailed by the sounds of obstreperous mirth at no great distance. "*The Princess and the Priest!*" was a cry distinctly heard; and moving towards the spot from whence it seemed to proceed, they found on the landing-place of the stairs which led through the false roof to the chapel, men busily employed in drawing forth a female, from what appeared a cave in the flooring. The lady, whose garments were of courtly description, resisted vigorously the unwelcome efforts of these uncourteous intruders, and it was a moot point whether her tongue or fist were the most belligerent; but no sooner was she fairly extricated from her retreat, than she was hoisted away by a dozen athletic fellows for a ducking in the moat, with many exultations that they had "ferretted out the black-devil Popish puss at last." One tore from her neck the carcanet of costly pearls, another made prize of her gold cloth-embroidered shoes, and a third seized the ruff of deep and rich point-lace which decorated her slender throat; but whilst her shrieks and defensive eloquence were distinctly heard during her "lift" (*scozzese*) down the great gallery, his reverence, Father Ambrose, was also drawn from the same hiding-place, amid the loudest acclamations and coarsest ribaldry.

"Away with him to the moat! Souse the old hypocrite! Never spare him a welting and let the canting cur go dry himself in purgatory!" &c. &c., were the ominous charges of the insurgents each to each; and with little ceremony, the unfortunate *frère* was hauled off, after the same fashion, and for the same catastrophe, as the Princess. Two or three men remained to examine the hollow from whence they had brought up the unhappy pair, in the anticipation of finding Sir John Huddleston also concealed therein; but this was impossible since the retreat was merely a kind of closet, (a slip, stolen, perhaps, from the structure of a lower apartment,) containing one very small deal table and a stool; a lamp was fastened to the table, and upon it, laid open, a copy of the Holy Scriptures, according to the Roman Catholic version, and in Latin; but so confined were the limits of this singular *cella*, that to its visitants it was evident how the discovery of the Princess and the Priest had been effected. This cell had been formed for the seclusion of one person only; that one might sit, but a companion must *stand*, and upon the table too, in which case his head touching the sliding board which covered the entrance of the nook, would probably, when

he became weary and restless, and changed his position ever so slightly, impart some degree of motion to it. The Princess then, it is presumed, all but dead from fear, suffocation, and *curiosity*, could not resist the temptation of sliding the board a very little on one side; its movement caught the eye of one not aware of the secret, and the subsequent discovery was the guerdon of that imprudent act. Finding nothing more in this place to reward their stay, the stragglers flew down stairs and through the gallery to join the main body of their allies, making good their way against the feeble opposition now offered to their advances; for too many of Sir John Huddleston's retainers had been desperately wounded and slain, for the remainder to dream of carrying on the unequal conflict, and sorrow and despair were actively enervating both their souls and bodies. Upon reaching the baronial hall, the loiterers found it exhibiting a scene of uproar and confusion from a far different cause to that which had hitherto occasioned it. Pinioned, ready for her involuntary ablution, stood the captured scion of regality, whose exterior rich velvet garment bore, by many fissures, ample testimony to the prowess with which she had endeavoured to repel unmerited indignities; her shoeless feet were bathed in the blood of the dying and the dead, strewed thickly around her, and through a *chevaux-de-frise* of anomalous arms and implements, supplied by the professions, military, agricultural, and culinary, blazed wrathfully her countenance, like the great red moon at its rising, or the rubicund sun scowling angrily from a wintry sky. "*I, a princess indeed!*" quoth the infuriated fair one: "villains and murderers as ye are, let me tell ye, that *she* whom ye seek is miles off, and aback my own gallows too. Blessed be Mary and all saints, for saving that child of light from Sathana's claws, as surely are *yourn*, ye gory Protestant hang-dogs! Take me to the ditch and ye will, O! babes o' Beelzebub; but learn to your despute, that when I left old Roan tied up at the back-door, Sir John and her Grace untethered the beast, and were over the stream in a twinkling; ay, long afore ye, ye *carnation* hang-dogs of Sathana's own body-guard, stormed the great front-gate. Where's Robbie the Reckless? that villainous Ravenshaw; that carrion-crow of all parties, (and true to none,) a bootless pickbone! where's that son of the very Mischief's mother? *He'll* tell ye whether or no I be Princess Royal of England, or pennylesse Dorothy Dare!" The virago paused for lack of breath, and as the fate of Ravenshaw was now ascertained, (he being the leader who was felled to the ground by a battle-axe, and trampled upon by the impetuous advance of his own bands, after carrying the assault of the postern,) several of the Protestant party confirmed Dorothy Dare's assertion, well remembering her phiz in the Cambridge market. "Loose her, loose her!" cried the leading man, (a Collegian,) "we war not with baggages like *her!* and Father Ambrose is free for this time, thanks to Him who died for us *all!* A shout of applause at this striking and unexpected trait of mercy and generosity proceeded from both parties; forthwith the furious market-woman, and timid



trembling priest were unbound, and with a rudely kind shove pushed out of the hall, "to go where they listed, but to beware of Pagan corruption for the future."

"And now, my brave boys," cried the young Cantab, who had assumed the command, *vice* Ravenshaw, deceased. "Now, my hearties, one cheer for King Edward, and Protestantism for ever! Then hunt out the women, and those dastards who've hidden with them; drive out, drive out, I say, both friend and foe from the hall, and we'll play up a merry game with old Sawston yet!"

Upon the highest of the Gog and Magog hills, (Cambridgeshire,) now rested a gallant cavalier and a female, who, though arrayed in the foul coarse garments of a market woman, was evidently of a rank less humble, for her complexion was fair even to pallidness, and her hands delicately fashioned and white. Well might it be guessed, that little accustomed was she to brave wind and weather in servile occupations, and the gallant who lacquyed her was in his demeanour, at once respectful as a courtier, and assiduous as a lover. The lady was seated on the turf, she panted for breath, and gazed sorrowfully upon the extent of country, which lay like a vast plain before her. The cavalier stood beside his fair companion, holding in slackened rein a jaded, ill-conditioned animal, whose mean housings and shaggy ungroomed exterior, bespoke a palfrey all unmeet for lady fair. The fine features of the noble gentleman betrayed anxiety, and his eyes regarded with unwearying attention, a distant object; suddenly a deep sigh escaped him, and at the same instant his companion exclaimed—"What is yon fire, Sir John?"—"May it please your Highness, it is my own hall; it is poor Sawston," replied Huddleston. The features of Mary instantly crimsoned with fury, and she vowed deadly vengeance against the Protestants, should Heaven ever permit her to reign over England. "Not so, not so, please your grace," cried the liberal-minded gentleman; "the very men who have thus wantonly ruined me, have a *religion* to advocate as well as ourselves; and I laud them for so doing, mischievous as are the means that they employ, since a disgrace and burning shame were they to *their* church, stood they not up for it as we for our *own*?"—"And is it possible that the lord protectors, or my brother, will not bring to condign punishment the perpetrators of so heartless an outrage? Can Edward, pacific as he is, in common justice overlook so heinous an offence?"—"Pardon me, my royal lady," returned Sir John, "if I presume to say, that my lord the king will, and *must* adopt such a mode of procedure; these Protestants are only now doing that, which we Catholics do with impunity every day; not a week ago, and my own retainers stormed and sacked the house of a neighbouring Protestant nobleman. May it please your Highness, when religious war rages through a country, each party instigating the other to deeds of violence, must be by even handed justice—" "Gad-a-mercy!" interrupted Mary, pettishly, "how the man talks! to hear him one night imagine his flaming house an acceptable burnt-offering.

Spare your breath, Sir John Huddleston, for I tell you, that when *I* come to the throne, those Protestant rogues shall *burn* like your mansion yonder; and as I take myself to be the cause of that dastardly conflagration, I vow to God, that the stones of Cambridge Castle shall help to rebuild Sawston Hall; and they who fired it shall be the masons!"

It is scarcely necessary to add that, as *Queen*, the cruel princess kept strictly her vow; but the injury Sawston Hall sustained by fire was immaterial, because on ringing the alarm-bell upon the first appearance of the flames, so many cohorts of well armed men poured in from the abodes of neighbouring gentry, that the rioters were fain to disperse, and by different routes return to their own abodes. The proximity of water rendered it no difficult task to subdue the flames, and to this very day Sawston Hall retains relics and vestiges of the royal fugitive's ever memorable visit. †††.